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# A Comparison Between the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure on Mary, the Mother of God

Leonard Glavin

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Leonard Glavin, O.F.M. Cap.

**A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE WRITINGS OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS  
AND ST. BONAVENTURE ON MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
1. Statement of the Thesis	5
2. Outline of the Thesis	7
3. Adversaries of the Thesis	9
4. Methodology	10
5. Summary of Introduction	10
 PART ONE: CONTRASTING THE THEOLOGIES OF ST. THOMAS AND ST. BONAVENTURE	
Introduction to Part One	11
Prelude to Any Proof of Thesis: Similarities between the Two Saints	16
Proof of Part One: Six Theological Differences	19
Problem: Are the Six Points Theological or Purely Philosophical?	20
Point One: Separate Epistemologies	33
1. St. Bonaventure: Intelligibility Equals Christ.	33
2. St. Thomas: Intelligibility in Creatures:	40
3. Summary of Point One	45
Point Two: An Uneven Use of Illumination and Exemplarism:	45
1. Illumination	46
2. Exemplarism	48
3. Summary.	58
Point Three: Various Types of Analogy	59
1. St. Thomas: Attribution and Proportionality	60
2. St. Bonaventure: Attribution, Proportion, Proportionality, Shadow, Vestige, and Image	64
3. Summary on Analogy in the Two Doctors	68
Point Four: Platonism and Aristotelianism.	68
1. St. Bonaventure: Augustinianism.	69
2. Aristotle: Medieval Beginnings	74
3. The Influence of Aristotle on Thomas and Bonaventure.	76
4. Summary	82
Point Five: Different Concepts of Theology as a Science	83
1. St. Thomas: A Demonstrative Science	84
2. St. Bonaventure: An Affective Science	89
3. Comparison of the Two Theologies	91
	27



Point Six: Divergent Uses of Scripture and the Fathers	95
1. St. Thomas	95
2. St. Bonaventure	102
3. Franciscan and Dominican Perspectives	126
4. A Shared Context of Twelfth Century Mariology	158
5. Theological or Purely Philosophical Differences?	165
6. Proof of Part One of the Thesis	166
PART TWO: THE MARIOLOGY OF ST. THOMAS AND ST. BONAVENTURE	167
Introduction	167
Chapter One: Mary is Mother of God by her Predestination and Preparation	176
1. Predestination	176
2. Preparation	193
3. Comparison of the Two Doctors on Mary's Predestination and Preparation	255
Chapter Two: Mary is the Mother of God by her Consent	257
1. St. Thomas on Mary's Consent	262
2. St. Bonaventure on Mary's Consent	264
3. Summary on Mary's Consent	278
Chapter Three: Mary is Mother of God by Conceiving and Bearing the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity	279
1. St. Thomas on Mary's Conceiving and Bearing Christ	279
2. St. Bonaventure on Our Lady's Conceiving and Bearing Christ	290
3. Summary on Mary's Conceiving and Bearing Christ	307
Chapter Four: Mary is Mother of God by a Permanent Relation of Motherhood to the Person of her Son	308
1. St. Thomas on the Relation of Mary to Jesus	308
2. The Permanent Relation of Motherhood according to St. Bonaventure	322
3. Summary and Comparison on the Relation of Motherhood	369
CONCLUSIONS	
Conclusions of Part One	378
Conclusions of Part Two	378
Concluding Unscientific Postscript	380
BIBLIOGRAPHY	387
Selected Bibliography: Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas on the Blessed Virgin Mary (1995-2013)	415

## INTRODUCTION

This dissertation will defend the thesis that St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure, great Catholic theologians of the thirteenth century, closely agree in their writings on Mary, Mother of God, even though their theologies, in general, were markedly different.

This introduction will have four parts:

Statement of the thesis.

Outline of the thesis

Adversaries of the thesis.

Methodology.

### 1. Statement of the Thesis

The thesis has two parts:

*Part I*. In general, the theologies of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure are very different.

*Part II*. In spite of this basic difference, their teaching on Mary, Mother of God, is basically the same, with some significant but very limited differences.

*Concerning Part One*: St. Bonaventure belongs to the Augustinian school, influenced by that Father of the Church and by Neo-platonist philosophy. For the Seraphic Doctor, the only important truth about anything is its relation to God and, after the incarnation, its relation to Christ. Consequently, for him, there is only one true science, based on the unity of the word of God and the unity of the human intellect as influenced and illuminated by that divine word.

St. Thomas Aquinas, while revering the wisdom of St. Augustine and even holding much of his Neo-platonism, followed the Aristotelianism of his Dominican teacher, St. Albert the Great, and found in creatures important truths *intrinsic* to them, *not* merely *extrinsic* truths, found in their relations to their creator. Instead, the Angelic Doctor, while always acknowledging God as the ultimate beginning and end of truth and intelligibility, as well as of being, holds that things can be, to a great degree true *in themselves*. He believes there are *many* sciences, not just one totally theocentric one, and these sciences are distinguished from one another, made many, by the objects they study. Many comparisons of the theologies of St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure have been written.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ee.gg. (chron. order) "S. Bonaventura e S. Tommaso," *L'Eco di San Francesco* 2 (1874), pp 97-100; Antoni Maria de Barcelona, "Sant Tomas i Sant Bonaventura dins l'escolastica,"

*Concerning Part Two:* while their theologies in general were markedly different, their teachings on Mary, Mother of God, were basically the same. These are the points on which they agree and which form the four chapters of Part Two:

Chapter One: she was predestined and prepared, in body and soul, to be Mother of God.

Chapter Two: she gave her informed consent.

Chapter Three: she conceived and bore the second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Chapter Four: she remains related to him by a real relation of motherhood.

Differences concerning the divine maternity<sup>2</sup> include:

Whether, before the annunciation, she made an absolute vow of virginity or only an intention;

What kind of role did Mary have in the incarnation, in her human conception of a divine person: active or passive?

What was the nature of her matrimonial consent to St. Joseph?

*Estudios Franciscanos* 34 (1924), pp. 249-256; P. Glorieux, "La première pénétration thomiste et son problème," *Revue apologetique* 53 (1931), pp. 257-275 and 385-410; P. Glorieux, "De quelques emprunts de S. Thomas," *Bulletin de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 8 (1936), pp. 154-167; L. Jessberger, *Das Abhängigkeitsverhältnis des hl. Thomas von Aquin, von Albertus Magnus und Bonaventura im dritten Buche des Sentenzenkommentars* (Würzburg: R. Mayr, 1936); B. Kruitwagen, "Sint Thomas en Sint Bonaventura," *Maash* 21 (December, 1936), p. 7; C. Balić, "S.Thomas et alii doctores scholastici," *Bogoslovska Smotra* 26 (1938), pp. 373-388; D. Callus, "The philosophy of St.Bonaventure and of Saint Thomas," *Black Friars* 21 (1940), pp. 151-164 and 249-267; W. Detloff, "Cur Divus Thomas?" *Wissenschaft und Weisheit*, 18 (1955), pp. 64-71; R. Boos, *Thomas von Aquin: Uebersetzungen, Aufsätze, Vortraege*, (Schaffhausen: Meier, 1959); J. Goncalves Cerqueira, "Tomas de Aquino, Sao Bonaventura," *Itinerarium* 18 (1972), pp 3-8; G. McCool, "Scientific theology: Bonaventure asnd Thomas revisited," *Thought* 49 (1974), pp. 374-396; L. Bogliolo, "Fede e ragione in San Bonaventura e San Tommaso," *Atti del Congresso Internazionale per il VII Centenario di San Bonaventura da Bagnoregio, Roma 15-20 Settembre, 1974*, Rome: Pontifical Theological Faculty "San Bonaventura," 1976, pp. 471-475; Shahan R. and Kovach, F., *Bonaventure and Aquinas: enduring philosophers*, (Norman OK: U. of Oklahoma Press, 1976); R. McKeon, "Philosophy and theology, history and science in the thought of Bonaventura and Thomas Aquinas," *Celebrating the medieval heritage: a colloquy on the thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure*, ed. D. Tracy, *The Journal of Religion* 58 supplement ( 1978), pp. S24-S51; Buckley, M. "Toward the construction of theology: response to Richard McKeon," *Celebrating the medieval heritage: a colloquy on the thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure*, ed. D. Tracy, *The Journal of Religion*, 58 supplement (1978), pp. S52-S63; N. Braune, "Is St. Bonaventure's *Itinerarium* a conservative document?" *Cithara* 36 (May, 1997), pp. 251-263.

<sup>2</sup> The abstract term "Divine Maternity" is recent, from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The ancients preferred the concrete, "Mother of God." Pius XI instituted a Feast of the Divine Maternity (October 11), which was suppressed after Vatican II. R. Laurentin, s.v. "Maternité Divine," *Encyclopedia Catholicisme*. The Divine Maternity is seen as the prerogative from which all the other privileges flow. J. Esquerda, S.v. "Maternidad de Maria," *Diccionario de historia eclesiástica in España* (Madrid: 1973).

How should the incarnation and Mary's motherhood of Jesus, the Divine Maternity, be viewed? As a process of becoming or as an established fact?

What were the circumstances under which Mary received sanctification before her birth?

These divergences are important to scholastic theologians but do not destroy the overall unity between their views of Mary, as Mother of God, which rest on the gospel of St. Luke, the Council of Ephesus, and the theology then current on the continent of Europe.

The first part of the dissertation will prove the marked differences between Thomas' and Bonaventure's theologies. The four chapters of the second part will demonstrate their great agreement on Mary, Mother of God and their limited disagreements. The conclusions will re-state the whole thesis, now as proven.

## **2. Outline of the Thesis**

After the statement of the thesis and this outline, the introduction briefly mentions adversaries and the methodology.

Part One of the thesis is that the theologies of St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure are very different. This is established by proving six points of contrast:

For St. Bonaventure, things are intelligible, not in themselves, but in Christ. This one intelligibility results, for St. Bonaventure, in only one science, theology. St. Thomas believes God helps us understand but creatures have a certain intelligibility in themselves. This results in many sciences, distinguished by their intelligible objects.

St. Bonaventure relies heavily on divine exemplarity and illumination for things to be intelligible and for the intellect actually to understand. St. Thomas believes in both of these, perhaps more than is commonly thought, but he emphasizes them much less than the Franciscan Doctor.

Both saints rely on analogy to express the difference – and similarity – between God and creatures. Both mention analogies of attribution, proportion, and proportionality, although St. Thomas abandons proportionality after a short time. St. Bonaventure adds the analogies of shadow, vestige, and image.

St. Thomas accepts Aristotle much more than St. Bonaventure, not just as having philosophical excellence but as a philosophy basically compatible with Christian faith – after some corrections – and even worthy of being incorporated into Catholic theology. Bonaventure is more reluctant to accept Aristotle as Christianizable. St. Thomas accepts much more of St. Bonaventure's Neo-Platonist Augustinianism than is often believed.

For St. Thomas, theology is a demonstrative science. For St. Bonaventure, it is an affective science. St. Thomas accepts the abstract, logical rigor of Aris-

tote. St. Bonaventure, like Church Fathers before him and like preachers even today, keeps doctrine united with the Christian's love of God.

St. Thomas uses Scripture in an objective, scientific way, asking principally what the literal meaning of the text is. St. Bonaventure wants the word of Scripture to produce "revelation" in the reader. He emphasizes the spiritual meanings more and demands spiritual preparation from the reader.

In studying the Fathers, St. Thomas uses a scientific method which is impressive in view of the limitations under which he worked. St. Bonaventure seeks spiritual "revelation" from the Fathers. He also uses them to supply the objective doctrine which he may sacrifice to subjective fervor in the reading of Scripture.

Part Two of the thesis is that the two Doctors' Mariologies are very similar. (Although they inherited from their Dominican and Franciscan predecessors, two very different approaches to theology, the theological doctrine about Mary at that time, especially on the western Continent of Europe was very meager. (The East was much richer and England partook somewhat of that.) This limited Western Mariology left little room for variation.

Part Two is divided into four chapters. First, there is a brief explanation of "Mother of God," and of the two Doctors' idea of Mariology.

Chapter One states that Mary is Mother of God by her predestination and her preparation in body – virginity – and soul – holiness. Both Saints agree on her great and prenatal holiness and both reject the Immaculate Conception.

Chapter Two explains that Mary is Mother of God by her consent to the Annunciation by the Archangel Gabriel.

Chapter Three is on Mary's conceiving and bearing the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. Motherhood is usually considered to consist in conception and childbirth. St. Thomas has a certain evolution in his views, outlined by Fr. Manteau-Bonamy, O.P.

The fourth and final chapter states that Mary is Mother of God by a permanent relation of motherhood to the Person of her Son. St. Thomas insists the relation of motherhood is to the whole Person of Jesus, not just to his human nature. Here, as so often, he states the position of the Catholic Church. Again, his views mature and Manteau-Bonamy traces them. The Divine Maternity results in consequences for all Christians, a relation of Mary to us. St. Bonaventure, of course, agrees, emphasizing a hierarchical action of Mary on us, following Pseudo-Dionysius, and discusses at length the cult due Mary, as compared with the cult due, for example, the cross.

The conclusion is that the thesis has been proven, that the differences between the theologies of St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure have been established in the first part of the dissertation and the similarities of their Mariologies have been proven in the second part.

### 3. Adversaries of the Thesis

Some ancients and moderns oppose the doctrine of Mary's Divine Maternity and her title "Mother of God." Nestorians, holding Mary is at most "*Christotokos*," "*Christ-bearer*," oppose both St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure, who held she is *God-bearer*, "*Theotokos*." Nestorius denied the hypostatic union and the communication of idioms based on it.<sup>3</sup> Nestorius said that Our Lord was only the "temple" of the Divine Son of God and said the tradition of the Fathers upheld his view.<sup>4</sup> He did have the support of, and was a follower of, Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Recently some question arose whether Nestorius really held the heresy attributed to him. G. Van Ackeren cites a study by J. Shannon in *Marian Studies*,<sup>5</sup> and Nestorius' final work, *Liber Heraclides*, to prove he did hold it and quotes Jugie<sup>6</sup>, "It would be astonishing if both friends and enemies were deceived ...and Nestorius has been appreciated only by a few choice souls several centuries after his death."<sup>7</sup>

Among contemporaries, some seem, if not to deny that Mary is Mother of God, to discount or downgrade this dignity. James T. O'Connor worries about the growing questioning of the *communicatio idiomatum*.<sup>8</sup> "Mother of God" may be the most commonly used form of the *communicatio idiomatum* and serves, he says, as the average Christian's hold on the Chalcedonian definition of the Church's faith in the nature and identity of the Lord<sup>9</sup>. Some Catholics have, apparently lost their hold on Chalcedonian doctrine and on the Divine Maternity of Mary. P. Schoonenberg, for example, has stated, "Jesus Christ is one person.

<sup>3</sup> T. Camelot, *Efeso y Calcedonia* (Vitoria: Editorial Eset, 1971) pp. 206-210.

<sup>4</sup> J. Ibañez & F. Mendoza, "Origen e historia del dogma de la Maternidad Divina de Maria," *Estudios Marianos* 42 (1978): p. 70. See also Camelot, *Efeso y Calcedonia*, pp. 206-210.

<sup>5</sup> J. Shannon, "Was Nestorius a Nestorian?" *Marian Studies* 6(1955): pp. 120-130.

<sup>6</sup> M. Jugie, *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, V, 161-162.

<sup>7</sup> G. Van Ackeren, "Mary's Divine Motherhood," in J. Carol, *Mariology* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1957), vol. 2, pp. 189f.

<sup>8</sup> A definition of "*communicatio idiomatum*:"...The communication of intrinsic properties, that is, a mutual reciprocity of attributes whereby what is proper to the human nature of Christ may be predicated of him as God, and, vice versa, what is proper to his divine nature may be predicated of him as man. The foundation of this is the hypostatic union ...We must not allow this axiom to be misapplied as though it justified the confusion of one nature with the other...." F. Jelly, "Congar's theological anthropology and doctrine of salvation," *Josephinum Journal of Theology*, VI (1999): p. 83.

<sup>9</sup> Modern Christologies and Mary's place therein: Dogmatic aspect," *Marian Studies*, XXXII (1981): p.69.

He is a human person.”<sup>10</sup> Sauras says A. Hulsbosch, E. Schillebeeckx, and P. Schoonenberg hold Christologies in which the Divine Maternity disappears.<sup>11</sup>

The writer knows of no one who opposes -- or has any opinion on -- the precise statement of the thesis: that Sts. Thomas and Bonaventure have different overall theologies but very similar doctrines on the Mother of God.

#### **4. Methodology**

##### ***Methodology in Part One: Their Theologies in General***

Guided by contemporary theologians, I have considered some of St. Bonaventure's ties to the Fathers and older medievals, seeing how his affective theology continued their Augustinianism. With regard to St. Thomas, I have studied his relation -- through St. Albert the Great -- to Aristotle. This relation led to the new demonstrative science of theology.

##### ***Methodology in Part Two: Mariology***

My topic is the Divine Maternity, which is also their topic, the main focus of both saints' Mariologies. For them, Mariology is a part of Christology and Christology is part of Soteriology. They both see Mary principally as the agent bringing Christ into the world, although an intelligent, willing agent, prepared in holiness for her great mission.

The Divine Maternity has a mental aspect, her intelligent consent (Chapter Two, Part Two) and a physical one, conceiving and bearing the Divine Word (Chapter Three). It was preceded by her predestination and preparation in body and soul (Chapter One) and followed by a permanent relation to her Son and to all Christians (Chapter Four). These objectively real divisions dictated the chapter boundaries.

#### **5. Summary of Introduction**

The introduction to the dissertation has stated the thesis: that Thomas and Bonaventure had very different theologies but very similar Mariologies. It mentioned some adversaries and briefly stated the methodology.

Now, in Part One, the dissertation will undertake to prove the first part of the thesis, that their theologies in general differ widely from one another.

<sup>10</sup> *Un Dios de los hombres*, Spanish translation (Barcelona, 1972), p. 86. Quoted in C. Pozo, "La Maternidad Divina de Maria," *Enciclopedia Mariana Posconciliar* (Madrid, 1975), p. 345.

<sup>11</sup> E. Sauras, "La Maternidad Divina de Maria en las nuevas cristologias," *Estudios Marianos* 42(1978) p.82.

## PART ONE

### CONTRASTING THE THEOLOGIES OF ST. THOMAS AND ST. BONAVENTURE

Part One of the thesis is that the theologies, in general, of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure, are profoundly different.

#### Introduction to Part One

Part One is about the great differences between the theologies of the two great Doctors. It is a preparation for showing, in Part Two, how similar their Marian theologies are, in particular their views on the Divine Motherhood (which more or less exhausts their Mariologies). Before expounding these great differences, I admit some overall similarities. They were united by the Catholic Faith and by the similarities of their two mendicant orders, the Friars Preacher and Friars Minor. They were graduates of the same University of Paris, at the same time. They were united by the attacks against mendicant orders. And both were influenced by Neo-Platonism, Aristotelianism, and Peter Lombard's *Book of Sentences*, the obligatory text for the whole university. Having considered those important points of unity, we proceed to six points of considerable difference.

The first point of difference is that, for St. Bonaventure, things are intelligible, not in themselves but in Christ. This one intelligibility results in there being only one science, which presents Christ as the sole source of intelligibility and everything else as intelligible through Him. This is a point of view very different from that of most Catholics today and from that expressed by the Second Vatican Council. On the other hand, St. Thomas holds, in a more modern manner, that creatures are, to some extent, intelligible in themselves and that there are many sciences, distinguished by their intelligible objects. He believes in a certain unity among these distinct sciences and in a subordination of other sciences to the superior science of theology but not a total unification of all sciences into that one. This gives us the first difference: one intelligible object and one science for Bonaventure, many of each for Thomas.

The second point of Part One is on their differing views on divine exemplarity and divine illumination. "Exemplarity" means that God's exemplary ideas, the ideas in His mind, according to which He created all things, are the source of creatures' intelligibility, that creatures are understandable to the



extent they imitate these divine exemplars. "Divine illumination" is the help God gives to created intelligences.

St. Bonaventure relies heavily on exemplarism as the source of creatures' intelligibility – to him a very limited intelligibility, as we see in Point One – and on illumination as a necessary help to created minds' very limited intelligence. He uses very negative terms to describe any attempt to understand or to be understood, apart from God's help. St. Thomas agrees with him more than is generally believed. He is known for his requirement that created *will* needs physical divine motion (or, in Bañez's more familiar term, "physical *pre-motion*") in order to act, to make a choice. Less known is his requirement for a similar divine physical motion for the intellect. He does not use the Seraphic Doctor's negative vocabulary about creature's ability to understand or to be understood. He has a greater esteem for creatures' intelligence and intelligibility. Intelligence and intelligibility are, of course, ultimately from God. But they have been *given to* creatures and are truly *in* them.

There is a certain parallel between St. Bonaventure's epistemology and that of Immanuel Kant. Kant said individual objects are totally singular and contingent. Any universality or necessity was a sign of subjectivity and *a priori* forms (That is, human ways of thinking or seeing the world that are inborn in the subject, color our vision, and do not come *from* the world but are imposed on it. *A priori*, that is, *prior* to, before experience and independent of it, not *a posteriori*, after experience and dependent on it.). The Seraphic Doctor agrees in denying, at least to a great extent, universality and necessity to creatures. For him, these show divine exemplarity in the object known, divine illumination in the subject knowing.

On exemplarism and illumination, there is a definite divide between the two Doctors, St. Bonaventure, emphasizing both of them more and being much more the Platonist, St. Thomas accenting them less, being much more the Aristotelian. Also, concerning exemplary ideas, St. Bonaventure places them in the Word, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, St. Thomas locates them in the Divine Nature, another significantly different teaching.

Point three speaks of the different use the two Saints make of analogy. Analogy is the employment of the same word with a meaning partly the same and partly different. When we speak of God and creatures, the words must have somewhat different meanings. But they cannot have totally different meanings, or we could never say anything truly about God.

The third point of Part One speaks of the uses which St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure make of analogy. Difficulties arise when we use the same words about God and creatures. We may say that God and humans are both good, wise, and active. But God is so far above us that His goodness, etc. are on a

completely different level from ours. If we take them as meaning exactly the same thing, we end up by concluding to some erroneous identities between God and creatures, the infinite superiority of God can be forgotten, and we can even end in pantheism. But if we say that words are used of God in a completely different sense, like Rudolf Otto's "Wholly Other," then we can never say anything meaningful about God. We cannot meaningfully say He is good or wise or powerful because these terms derive their meaning from our earthly experience of goodness, wisdom, and power, from which He is, according to Otto, "Wholly Other." We are left with the only possibility, that words and concepts are applied to God and creatures with a meaning that is partly the same, partly different. This is analogy.

St. Bonaventure uses analogies called "the analogy of proportion," "of proportionality," "of attribution." He also used analogies of shadow, vestige and image, varying according to the closeness of the creature to God.

St. Thomas uses the analogy of attribution (or proportion), in which an attribute is said primarily of one thing and in an extended, analogous manner of other things because of their relation to the first. "Healthy" is said, first of all, of a living body which possesses health and secondarily of those things which cause, maintain, restore, or manifest that health. He also used, for a short time, the analogy of proportionality, based on the relation of one pair of things to a second pair. He used proportionality only for a short time because it seemed to him to place something, if only an abstract idea, in some way "over" God. For instance, a top hat and a kid glove both can truly fit. But they fit in different ways. The analogous notion of "fitting" is, in some way over all the members of the analogy. This causes some incongruity when applied to God. Some Thomists today, following Cajetan, say the identity of God's essence and existence is analogous to the proportion, the "fittingness" between a creature's essence and existence. But then the notion of "habitude," which includes both identity and proportion, is, in a way, "over" the whole analogy and its analogates, including God. This, St. Thomas would not allow. He did not want anything, even an abstract idea, placed, in any way, over God.

St. Bonaventure used, like St. Thomas, analogies of proportion, proportionality, and attribution. Also, an analogy, not found in Thomas, of shadow, vestige, and image.

The fourth point contrasts St. Bonaventure's Augustinianism with St. Thomas' Aristotelianism.

The Seraphic Doctor is an Augustinian, as Etienne Gilson, among many others, testifies. He uses Aristotle very sparingly, apparently forced by the statutes and practice of the University of Paris. These limited uses seem exceptions proving his Augustinian rule.

St. Thomas is called a disciple of Aristotle. He at least *consults* him consistently and adopts many of his ideas, while producing a truly original, *personal* synthesis. He is much more a master than a disciple. But he is heavily influenced by Aristotle. He painstakingly combed out anti-Christian teachings of the Stagirite, respectfully incorporated valid insights. In his careful distinctions, he has left an excellent example to those who would Christianize Marx and atheistic existentialism.

The Angelic Doctor's synthesis, heavy with Aristotle, has been applauded by many Catholics and by the Holy See. No other theologian or philosopher has been praised by Popes with anything like the warmth applied to St. Thomas.

Thomas retains more Augustinianism than some realize. Aristotle said the intellect was a *tabula rasa*, a clean slate but St. Thomas speaks of inborn habits, synderesis and the habit of principles. He also holds Plato-like exemplary ideas. Still, the many Aristotelian ideas which the Dominican accepted and the Franciscan rejected show there is a great gulf between them, here, too.

In Point Five, we see the different concepts the two Doctors have of theology. The Franciscan, sees it as an affective science, the Dominican, a demonstrative one. St. Bonaventure conceives of a science in relation to the subject knowing, to the mind which possesses it. For him, knowledge, action, and passion are inseparable. Emotion is the moving force of all knowledge. Therefore, to him, theology is an affective science. Our minds are naturally connected to God, who is present, in some way, in all knowledge. His presence can be made explicit through the ontological argument, by reflecting on the idea of God ever-present in our minds.

St. Thomas thinks of a science, not primarily in relation the subject knowing, the mind possessing it, but to the object known, the realities it studies. Theology has for its basis, its knowable object the demonstrable reality of God and it is therefore a demonstrative science. In theology, as in the physical sciences, the object studied provides the principles by which it ought to be studied and the principles of organization. Ideas do not prove existence in either physical or theological science. God's existence is proved from the experience of created being, not from an idea in our minds.

An affective science proceeds in an investigative and a reasoning manner, much like a demonstrative science. But an affective science is a practical science and its purpose is to produce, in the knowing subject, laudable opinions and virtuous deeds.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of a demonstrative science is to know objective reality. Its mode of procedure is to establish principles based on its subject matter and to form conclusions by reasoning. St. Thomas' commentary on the

<sup>1</sup> As the preacher tries to do each Sunday.

*Sentences* was not an interpretation of the personal opinions of its author. It was the construction of demonstrations in the science of theology, in order to know that science's object. Theology is distinct in its principles and methods from other sciences. Its mode of procedure is adapted to its own subject matter. It uses reason to draw conclusions about faith, to know divine matters.<sup>2</sup>

The manner of proceeding in theology, according to St. Thomas, is argumentative, first by authorities, then by reasons and natural likenesses. The role of the natural likenesses or similitudes is to lead the mind, as a child is led by the hand, to an understanding of the principles of faith, of themselves beyond the grasp of human understanding.<sup>3</sup>

McKeon says that the affective approach is found in experimental science, both in Roger Bacon and in twentieth century physics, not just in mystical intuition, and that the demonstrative method is found in Meister Eckhart and in transcendental understanding, not only in empirical science.<sup>4</sup>

Their different approaches to Scripture and the Fathers are discussed in Point Six. St. Thomas has a view of both of these sources basically similar to that of our own day. He can be called "objectivist" in comparison to St. Bonaventure, who, here as elsewhere, emphasizes the knowing subject. According to him, the reader of Scripture needs previous illumination, and then can go beyond the letter of Scripture to achieve "revelation" – in Bonaventure's sense of the word – and wisdom. The Seraphic Doctor so emphasizes the subjective predisposition and consequent personal perfection as to endanger any objective literal meaning to the words of the Bible. However, he allows that the objective, literal sense can be achieved through the witness of the Fathers.

Faithful Catholics will see the need for good previous spiritual and mental dispositions to avoid the distortions of Scripture produced by some and also see the words of the Bible not as an end in themselves but as part of God's forming for Himself a holy people. Professional Scripture scholars of today will emphasize these less than devout layfolk and far less than St. Bonaventure. They will probably feel a preference for the more sophisticated objectivism of St. Thomas.

St. Bonaventure does speak of some objective elements. He speaks of types in Scripture, to answer those who say the Bible says little of Our Lady. These types are women<sup>5</sup> in the Old Testament who represent Mary and deepen our

<sup>2</sup> McKeon, pp. S32f.

<sup>3</sup> McKeon, p. S33.

<sup>4</sup> McKeon, pp. S35f.

<sup>5</sup> Many today see the *man* Abraham as the fullest type of Mary. The story of salvation in the Old Testament begins with Abraham, after the first twelve chapters of Genesis, heavy with sin; the New Testament history of salvation begins with Mary. They are both persons of great faith:

understanding of her. He speaks of four senses of Scripture, the literal sense, in *his* understanding of "the literal sense," not today's, and three spiritual senses, seeking out the doctrinal, moral, and eschatological meanings of the text. His Marian exegesis depends greatly on allegory and typology. Tavard points out that St. Bonaventure differs from the scientific exegesis of our time and even from contemporary Mariology. Bonaventure believed the exegete ought to go beyond the literal sense to discover its spiritual meaning, through the use of metaphor and symbolism. He found in the Gospel way of life, professed by St. Francis and authoritatively approved by the Church, a privileged and reliable window into the meaning of the Bible. These are all objective elements in Bonaventurian Scriptural analysis.

The subjective elements consist mainly of searching for "Revelation," in the Seraphic Doctor's *subjective* sense. This is a passing from the letter to the spirit, from the outer to the inner, from the objective to the personal. This Bonaventurian "Revelation" will produce in the properly disposed reader, several kinds of wisdom, uniform, multiform, omniform, and, finally, nulliform. Scripture is understood more and more through time. It will be completely understood, its meaning completely "revealed," only at the end of time.

St. Bonaventure's strong emphasis on the subjective pole of Scripture study and St. Thomas' focusing on the objective prove the sixth point of Part One, that their attitudes toward the study of the Bible are very different and their theologies, also on this point, differ greatly.

### **Prelude to Any Proof of Thesis: Similarities between the Two Saints**

St. Thomas Aquinas, the great Dominican theologian, and St. Bonaventure, his Franciscan contemporary, began with many points of unity. Catholic Faith was the great bond between them. Historians challenge the pleasant stories of their friendship. Faith is a stronger unity. J. Bougerol says, "In the framework of medieval Christianity, their closeness is much more apparent than their opposition."<sup>6</sup>

They were Catholics of the thirteenth century and of the continent of Europe. England's faith in the Immaculate Conception of Mary never reached

"Abraham, our father in faith, can teach us much about Mary, our mother in faith." National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Behold Your Mother; Woman of Faith* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1973) no. 30. Each was called by God to sacrifice an only son. "But while God tried Abraham's faith without the death of his son, Mary's faith was tested to the point of watching her Son die upon the cross for our salvation." F. Jelly, *Madonna* (Huntington IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1986), p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> J. Bougerol, *Introduction to the works of Bonaventure*, transl. J. deVrink (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1964), p. VIII.

them, although they both placed her sanctification close to the beginning of her existence, as if wishing to remove original sin from her entirely.<sup>7</sup>

Both were members of the recently created mendicant religious orders, on which the Popes relied, for 1) evangelizing the ordinary people by their preaching and example, especially of poverty, and 2) improving the education of the clergy. Both were Masters of Theology of the great University of Paris, were granted the degree on the same day, by the command of the Holy See. They shared the opposition of secular masters, led by Guillaume de Saint-Amour who called the teaching and practice of evangelical poverty of both the Dominican and Franciscan orders a distortion of the Gospel, even a heresy. Guillaume called the mendicant friars "forerunners of the Anti-christ and instruments of the coming destruction of the world."<sup>8</sup>

Each of these saints contributed to the new intellectual discipline: scientific theology.

The two great intellectual events of the thirteenth century with which the Franciscans and Dominicans were closely associated, the rise of the University of Paris and the invention of scientific theology, have contributed more than anything else to the distinct habit of mind which subsequent generations in the West have come to call the Catholic mind.<sup>9</sup>

St. Thomas Aquinas died at Fossanova on his way to the Council of Lyons. St. Bonaventure, after the Council's fourth session. "Thus the Council of Lyons

<sup>7</sup> "Creditor enim quod cito post conceptionem et animae infusionem fuerit sanctificata." Aquinas, *Quodlibet*, VI, q. 5, a. 1. "Rationabiliter enim creditor quod illa quae genuit Unigenitum a Patre, plenum gratiae et veritatis, prae omnibus aliis maiora gratiae privilegia accepit. . . Invenimus autem quibusdam aliis hoc privilegialiter concessum ut in utero sanctificarentur: sicut Ieremias . . . et sicut Ioannes Baptista." Aquinas, III, 27, 1, c. "Beata Virgo . . . ampliorem sanctificationis gratia obtinuit quam Ioannes Baptista et Ieremias . . ." Aquinas, III, 27, 6, ad 1. Cf. *Scriptum super Sententias*, III, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 2.: "It is true that the sanctification of the Blessed Virgin excelled the sanctification of other saints as to magnitude and promptness." Bonaventure, III Sent., d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, ad 5; III, 69a. Cf. *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, sermo 6; IX 702b. Tavard says, for Bonaventure: "She must be above the saints not only in 'abundance of holiness,' but also in 'acceleration of time.' In her case, the Holy Spirit, working above what nature does, shortened the normal course of time. Therefore at the instant of her creation, grace was infused in the flesh. Because 'wisdom is faster than all that is fast' (Wis. 7:24), and 'grace is much more powerful than nature,' the effect of grace was faster in the flesh than the effect of evil in her soul." Tavard, G., *The Forthbringer of God* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1988), p. 20.

<sup>8</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 165; Guillaume was condemned by Pope Alexander IV in 1256; *ibid*.

<sup>9</sup> McCool, "Scientific Theology: Bonaventure and Thomas revisited," *Thought* 49 (1974): p.375. "There is a dialogue between Rahner and Lonergan in the writings on the nature of theology and its structuring role in the unifying of experience which reminds the reader of the thirteenth century debate between Bonaventure and Thomas on the same topic. Rahner seems closer to Bonaventure. Lonergan reads more like Thomas. . . . The debate . . . runs through their writings on the Trinity and grace." McCool, 376f.

... claimed, at least indirectly, the lives of the two greatest theologians of the thirteenth century."<sup>10</sup>

They were both well acquainted with the Neo-Platonist theology of the previous centuries and, to a greater or lesser extent accepted the Aristotelian trends of their own time. St. Thomas was more of a Neo-Platonist, more a disciple of the Neo-Platonist St. Augustine, than is often recognized. And St. Bonaventure, in spite of his reluctance, was deeply influenced by Aristotle. Of course, they had vigorous differences, with Thomas on the Aristotelian side and Bonaventure on the Augustinian.

Richard McKeon says of them:

"Bonaventura and Thomas Aquinas taught at the University of Paris, where they both gave required two-year-long theological courses on the *Book of Sentences* of Peter Lombard. They were bound by statutes of the University governing the use of translations of Aristotle and of Arabic philosophers. ...and they were involved in controversies with each other, which reflected differences between the orders, and with the secular clergy, which reflected differences within the hierarchy of the church, within the faculty of the university, and within the administration of the city of Paris".<sup>11</sup>

Except the controversies with each other, all these unified them.

The universally required *Book of Sentences* brought together opposed opinions on each of various topics. This method of opposition and proof became known as the scholastic method and was another point of unity between the two Doctors. Philosophical methods governed the division of material, and inquiry. This involved the Franciscan in philosophical theology more than he might have liked.<sup>12</sup>

The two great doctors both began their commentaries on the *Sentences* with a discussion on the nature of theology as a science. They shared their subject matter and, to some extent, the method of inquiry. They used philosophy to set in order questions in theology and in the other sciences. Of course, they had different philosophies and this led them to different conclusions about the sciences' nature and methods.<sup>13</sup> New translations of Aristotle and Arabian phi-

<sup>10</sup> McCool, p.374.

<sup>11</sup> McKeon, "Philosophy and theology, history and science in the thought of Bonaventura and Thomas Aquinas," "Celebrating the medieval heritage: a colloquy on the thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure," *The Journal of Religion*, 58 supplement (1978): p.S27. [N.B. This supplement to Volume 58 numbers its pages "S1," "S2," etc. This first chapter has many citations so numbered. Also, McKeon uses the Latin spelling "Bonaventura," which is retained in direct quotations from him.]

<sup>12</sup> McKeon, pp. S29f.

<sup>13</sup> McKeon, pp. S30f.

losophers distinguished new kinds of science and new methods of investigation. They both used these – more wholeheartedly or less – to lay out different ways of inquiry into their common subject of theology.<sup>14</sup>

The Angelic and Seraphic Doctors are usually described in contrast to each other. But they were doctors of the same Church, of closely related religious orders, in the same century and the same city, at the same university, bound to the same scholastic method.

These agreements between the saints are a relevant part of the picture. But the thesis speaks of differences. With the similarities as background, let us begin to consider those divergences. Six points of difference stand out.

### **Proof of Part One: Six Theological Differences**

Part One of the thesis states: “In general, the theologies of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure are very different.” This first chapter will attempt to prove that. We shall group the differences under these six headings:

For St. Bonaventure, things are intelligible, not in themselves, but in Christ. Consequently, there is only one science, theology, which presents Christ and this one basic intelligibility. For St. Thomas, God helps us to understand but things have considerable intelligibility in themselves. Consequently, there are many sciences, distinguished by the intelligible objects of each one.

St. Bonaventure relies much more on divine exemplarity and divine illumination as the sources of intelligibility and of understanding (of “intellection”). St. Thomas believes in them but emphasizes them much less. For him, the human mind has more independent intelligence and created things have more independent intelligibility than the Franciscan Master allows them.

Both saints rely on analogy of proportion, proportionality, and attribution. St. Bonaventure also uses shadow, vestige, and image.

St. Thomas relied heavily on Aristotle, with some retention of Augustinianism. St. Bonaventure reluctantly used Aristotle, relied much more on the New-Platonism of Augustinianism.

For St. Thomas, theology is a demonstrative science; for St. Bonaventure, an affective one.

The saints use Scripture and the Fathers in different ways. St. Thomas is more objective, interested in having a reliable text, and in the literal sense of the Bible, for itself and as a foundation of the spiritual senses. St. Bonaventure, less interested in the letter of the text, insists upon a personal, subjective preparation for Bible study and wants to go beyond a grasp of the literal meaning to grow in holiness personally, by the acquiring of various wisdoms. The

<sup>14</sup> McKeon, p. S31



Fathers help in this personal, subjective growth and also strengthen the objective understanding of Scripture, which the Seraphic Doctor emphasizes less than personal progress.

These six differences suffice to prove their theologies are notably different.

### **Problem: Are the Six Points Theological or Purely Philosophical?**

Learned objection has stated these six points are purely philosophical, not suitable topics for a dissertation in theology. Are they entirely philosophical? My answer: Not entirely.

A Catholic physician once looked me in the eye and told me the Church had no business, no right to condemn abortion. That was a medical decision, he said. Physicians had approved abortion and that finished the debate. A Catholic businessman similarly confronted me and said the Church had no right to make any statements about business ethics. When I lived in Italy, many of its Catholic citizens claimed they had every right to vote for the Communist Party because, while they held to Catholicism as the religious factor in their lives, they followed Stalin and Togliatti for the economic factor.

A perfectly logical argument can be made for all those opinions, if only you begin with a sufficiently narrow concept of the Catholic Christian religion, for instance, if you say the Church is entitled only to perform rituals, to express adoration to God, and to say *nothing* to humans about any good or evil in their lives. I believe certain pagan religions have been conducted *almost* that neutrally. The Catholic Church has always claimed the right to at least to exclude evil-doers from Eucharistic communion and to define what constitutes evil-doing.

In like manner, it is quite conceivable that philosophy and theology might have a great gulf between them, provided only that each is defined so narrowly as not to intrude on the other. Such narrow conceptions were alleged of the Latin Averroists by St. Thomas and of contemporary universities, below, by me. It has never been allowed by the Church that a Catholic philosopher might give assent to any atheistic or immoral doctrine he or she might wish to adopt. And when philosophies are accepted into theologies as a constituent, even a defining element, whether Neo-Platonist theologies of the Fathers of the Church or the Marxist theologies of some recent Liberationists, it would seem that those philosophies are irrevocably the concern of their theological allies and enemies. When Bishop Tempier condemned certain Aristotelian doctrines, he brought them into the theological arena. At the very least, the university divines could have said that, in the light of Catholic *theology*, these were merely

philosophical and of no concern to the Church. Theologians so detached were in short supply in Paris just then.

Point One says that for St. Bonaventure, things are intelligible only in Christ; for St. Thomas, things are *not* intelligible only in Christ. Consequently, for Bonaventure, theology is the only science and for Thomas, theology is not the only science. This is a theological disagreement. Point two says both saints teach exemplarism and illumination. The Seraphic puts the exemplars in the Word, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, St. Thomas in the divine nature. That much is theological. Whether his illumination is natural or supernatural is not perfectly clear, so that may be theological. Point three speaks of analogies. These seem essentially philosophical although they enter into dogmatic, supernatural theology. M. J. Scheme uses analogy more than he discusses it. But in regard to "notitia" [knowledge] of formal cause, he says, "In theology, we attain to this by the employment of analogous concepts."<sup>15</sup> G. B. Mondin, with elegant succinctness says,

Catholic and Protestant theologians generally agree that the very possibilities of any knowledge of God, both natural and revealed, rest on analogy: in the natural knowledge it is man who takes some concepts from nature and applies them to God; whereas in the supernatural knowledge it is God himself who chooses some of the concepts used by man in order to tell him something about himself.<sup>16</sup>

To reflect upon the data and the manner of Revelation is surely theological, far beyond the boundaries of philosophy.

Point Five is on the nature of theology: is it a demonstrative science or an affective science? A theological question, since there is no higher science to judge theology. At least, medievals – and some others – do not believe there is. Point Six is about the Doctors' use of Scripture and the Fathers of the Church.

When we consider these points, six, five, one, two, and three, it would seem they are highly theological, that there is little *purely* philosophical content in them.

Point Four is about the use of Aristotle, wholehearted for one, reluctant for the other. Aristotle is a philosopher. But there can be a theological controversy about a non-theological concept. A medical topic: embryonic stem cell research, organ transplants, in vitro fertilization. An economic question: the living wage, interest on a loan. A political topic: secular democracy, the rights of immigrants. Judaism and Christianity demand their people obey God at work, at play, at home, or in outer space. Moral and dogmatic problems will arise in all

<sup>15</sup> *The Mysteries of Christianity*, (St. Louis, Herder, 1964), pp. 758f.

<sup>16</sup> Analogy, theological use of, *New Catholic Encyclopedia*.

these environments. Bishops will be asked to answer them and bishops often seek theological counsel. Not, directly, or solely, philosophical counsel, because the question is, "What must a *Christian* do, say, or believe in these circumstances?" Philosophy will enter, as it must in *all* theology.

In Paris, around 1250 A.D., there was a *theological* controversy over a philosophy, Aristotelianism. The question was not, "Is this a good philosophy? Does it have philosophical strong or weak points?" but, "Is this a good philosophy for *Catholics*?" In particular, "Is this a good philosophy for Catholic theologians to incorporate into their theology?" (Medievals believed theology was the application of philosophy to Scripture.) Some said, "Aristotle is entirely compatible with Catholic Faith." Some said, "Aristotle is entirely incompatible with Catholic Faith." Some said, "We can change him a little and *make* him compatible with the Catholic Faith." And some, allegedly, said, "He's such a *wonderful* philosopher, let's just not worry about the Catholic Faith!" This was a religious debate, of the possible relations between Aristotle and Christianity, like our present debates about the relations between embryonic stem cell research and Christianity, between Marxism and Christianity, between unbridled capitalism and Christianity. Bishops issue stern commands to their faithful, as they would have no right to do, were these not *religious* questions, relating to our Christ-life and eternal salvation. When a religious dispute is carried on with academic sophistication, it is properly called "theological."

In Paris, around 1250 A.D., this was not only a theological controversy. Aside from a lively debate about the worth or error of the mendicant way of religious life, it was the *only* theological controversy.<sup>17</sup> No one was arguing about the *homououssion* or the *Filioque*, or faith without works. You could be a moderate Aristotelian, an extreme Aristotelian, an anti-Aristotelian, or you could go home.

This was almost the whole difference between the theologies of Thomas and Bonaventure. Thomas was more than moderately (less than totally) *for* Aristotle. Bonaventure, more than moderately (less than a full hundred percent) against him. He felt he had good natural knowledge but had nothing to contribute to theology and the search for Christian wisdom. Aristotle's unemotional rigor led Thomas to treat theology as a demonstrative science, while Bonaventure remained in patristic fervor. Which is the better way for theology? A theological question, like our discussions of Hegelian, Existentialist, Marxist theologies today.

<sup>17</sup> Joachinism, from the Abbot of Fiore, existed but, at that time, more devotional than academic.

Are there *purely theological* differences between these medieval saints? A few odds and ends. St. Thomas thought that beatitude consists essentially in intellectual vision, St. Bonaventure in intellectual vision and in love. Maybe in enjoyment, too. St. Bonaventure expanded the knowledge of Christ; St. Thomas restricted it. "In any event, his [Bonaventure's] position remains distinct from that of Thomas Aquinas, for instance, who deliberately limits the extent of Christ's knowledge."<sup>18</sup> The Franciscan said Mary made an early and absolute vow of virginity, the Dominican, a later, conditional one. The Angelic Doctor admitted the possibility of other assumptions to heaven, the Seraphic defended Mary's as a unique honor. St. Bonaventure followed the Greek Fathers on the Trinity and the mediation of the Word between the Father and creation. St. Thomas put the mediating exemplary ideas in the Divine Nature. And all these differences arose, directly or indirectly, from their attitudes toward Aristotle. They were two orthodox Catholic theologians (That was not then the oxymoron it seems to be now!), members of newly founded mendicant Orders, living at the same time, in the same city, studying and then teaching at the same university, united in practically everything except Aristotle and his compatibility with true Christian wisdom. *That* was the heart of their disagreement, of their *precisely theological* controversy, roughly outlined in my six points.

As mentioned above, wise readers have objected that the following six points are not theological but only philosophical. I do not believe in any great gulf fixed between theology and philosophy. Medievals believed theology was the result of applying philosophy to the basic data of the religion. I still believe it, although modern university practice militates against this belief.

Each department, or "school" of a contemporary university considers itself totally unrelated, separate from, and *superior to*, all the other departments. For any of them, including theology, to admit to the use of philosophy would be to sell the pass to enemy aliens. Yet we have the Kantian theology of Schillebeeckx, the Hegelian theology, first of the Modernists, and now of Küng, Existentialist theologies, and Marxist Liberation Theology. In moral theology we have recently had Consequentialism, born of philosophical Utilitarianism. I do not believe it is possible to construct a theology without introducing a great deal of philosophical building material.

Tresmontant tells us: "...Orthodox Christian thought, in the first centuries, chose in Greek philosophy the elements which seemed to it serviceable..."<sup>19</sup> And Journet: "...The Fathers of the first centuries ...had to give technical precision to the notions of paternity and filiation, of generation and procession, of subsis-

<sup>18</sup> Bougerol, p. 115.

<sup>19</sup> C. Tresmontant, *Les Idées maitresses de la métaphysique chrétienne* (Paris: Seuil, 1962), p. 15

tent relation and of consubstantiality, of person and of nature.”<sup>20</sup> DeLetter says, “...It was ...Middle Platonism and ...Neo-Platonism...that provided theologians with the phraseology and ideas for reflection on their faith.”<sup>21</sup> Clement of Alexandria tells us, “...The liberal arts of the Greeks, along with philosophy itself, came to man from God.... By philosophy I mean not the Stoic or Platonic or Epicurean or Aristotelian school, but a selection from them of what was correctly said and taught with justice along with pious knowledge...”<sup>22</sup> Lonergan says, “... It was almost inevitable that the Christians who lived under the sway of the Roman Empire should come to ask themselves how they ought to combine the religion they had received from the Jews with the culture developed by the Greeks.”<sup>23</sup> Also from Lonergan, “...If error seeks supporting arguments in scripture and, at the same time, decks itself out in the terms and the distinctions of a philosophy, it can except by a doctrine of hermeneutics, combined with an opposing *philosophy*. And this, *in fact, is what happened* [emphases added, Leonard Glavin =L. Gl.] at Alexandria [with Clement, L. Gl.]”<sup>24</sup> He further claims, “In Tertullian one can detect a Hellenistic ontology of Stoic inspiration, ...In Origen, too, one can find a Hellenistic ontology, derived rather from Platonism....We do not mean to suggest that the dogmatic realism, contained implicitly in the word of God, became an explicit realism, without any contributory influence of Hellenistic culture.”<sup>25</sup>

Early Christianity needed this input from philosophy. Some are reluctant to admit this, because of accusations that the Fathers allowed Greek philosophy to overwhelm the Christian religion and turn it into something entirely different. Harnack made allegations of that sort.<sup>26</sup> In fact, they changed the meaning of words like *ousia*, *hypostasis*, and others, to fit their Christian message. But they *did* accept the words, and much of the *meaning* of the words, because they *needed* them. “Theology being the reflex and systematic expression of faith that seeks understanding, Christian reflection on the history of man’s salvation needed a philosophy.”<sup>27</sup> And that philosophy, changed where necessary, entered into the Church’s understanding of her message, beyond academic theology. How

<sup>20</sup> C. Journet, *What is dogma?* Transl. M. Pontifex (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1964), p. 73.

<sup>21</sup> P. de Letter, “Theology, influence of Greek philosophy on,” *New Catholic Encyclopedia*.

<sup>22</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* I, 7, 37, i. 6; PG 8, 7331 B and D.

<sup>23</sup> B. Lonergan, *The Way to Nicea*, transl. C. O’Donovan (from Latin, *De Deo Trino*, Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964) (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976), p. 110

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

<sup>26</sup> A. von Harnack, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, Leipzig, 1900.

<sup>27</sup> P. de Letter, “Theology, influence of Greek philosophy on,” *New Catholic Encyclopedia*.

could we preach or catechize about God and Christ without the concepts of nature and person, derived from philosophy?

Once a theology is established, it is no longer a question of applying a philosophy to matters almost-totally-unphilosophical as happened in the first centuries of Christianity. Now all Christian theologies stand independently as academically mature world-views among others, ready to give as well as receive. But there is still a seeking among philosophies and receiving them into the expression of the Church's teaching.

The Christian Middle Ages had the challenge of incorporating Aristotle's philosophy. The process was not entirely smooth. Alexander of Hales quoted from most of the books of Aristotle. But, we are told, "...He had no clear idea of the true meaning of Aristotelian philosophy.... His work belongs to a period when no collective theological effort had been made to assimilate the newly discovered Aristotelian world."<sup>28</sup> Please note that it is spoken of as a *theological* effort.

Speaking of missionary activity, the Second Vatican Council said, "...Just as happened in the economy of the incarnation, the young churches ...borrow from the customs, traditions, wisdom, teaching, arts, and sciences of their people everything that could be used to praise the glory of the Creator."<sup>29</sup> Nor is this only among new Christians that this happens. In the section, "What the Church receives from the modern world," of the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, we read, "It [the Church, L. Gl.] profits from the experience of past ages, from the progress of the sciences, and from the riches hidden in various cultures, through which greater light is thrown on the nature of man and new avenues to truth are opened up. The Church learned early in its history to express the Christian message in the concepts and language of different peoples and tried to clarify it in the light of the wisdom of their philosophers:..."<sup>30</sup> If the Church is clarifying her own message in the light of philosophers, this is *not* an extrinsic ornament. It enters into the Church's understanding of herself. It is certainly an essential element of theology, perhaps even deeper than academic theology. The encyclical, *Humani Generis*, supported not only by the authority of Pope Pius XII but by the sad fulfillment of his warnings, speaks of, "That sound philosophy which has long been, as it were, a patrimony handed down by earlier Christian ages, and which moreover possesses

<sup>28</sup> A. Emmen, "Alexander of Hales," *New Catholic Encyclopedia* .

<sup>29</sup> Second Vatican Council, *Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity*, transl. A. Flannery (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press), no. 22.

<sup>30</sup> Second Vatican Council, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, transl. A. Flannery (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press), no. 44.

an authority of even higher order, since the Teaching Authority of the Church, in the light of divine revelations itself, has weighed its fundamental tenets...."

He goes on:

...God, the highest Truth, has created and guides the human intellect, ...that... it may build truth on truth in the same order and structure that exist in reality, the source of truth. Let no Christian therefore, whether philosopher or theologian, embrace eagerly and lightly whatever novelty happens to be thought up from day to day, but rather let him weigh it with painstaking care and a balanced judgment, lest he lose or corrupt the truth he already has, with grave danger and damage to his faith.<sup>31</sup>

Vatican II, in *Gaudium et Spes*, says the Church clarifies its message in the light of philosophies. We should conclude that this philosophical clarification enters into her eternal but newly clarified message. Pius XII warns philosophers not lightly to abandon the ancient philosophy whose fundamental tenets have been weighed by the Church, lest he suffer "damage to his *faith*." So this Church-weighed philosophy is very closely connected with the faith. Not just with theology but with the faith.

John Macquarrie, speaking not of early Christianity but theology in general, says, "...I am claiming that a positive relationship between theology and philosophy is certainly good for theology, ...I do not believe any theology can stand without philosophically defensible foundations, and so, no worthwhile theology can be delivered from the duty of conversing with philosophy."<sup>32</sup> He does not quite say that theology is founded upon philosophy but I wish clearly to assert my belief that theology is founded on faith and the Revelation of God. Christian theology *uses* philosophy, even internalizing it but it is not *founded* upon it. Again, Macquarrie does not quite say it is.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Pius XII, *Humani Generis* (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1950), no. 29.

<sup>32</sup> J. Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1977)

<sup>33</sup> When I say philosophy *must* be present in any theology, "philosophy" would have to include the crypto-philosophies devised by other university departments to define, defend, expound, and exalt their own subjects without relying on explicit "philosophy," the province of a rival department. Are these truly "philosophies?" Definitions vary. Mine is "A unification of ordinary human experience, into general principles, without the help of scientific instruments, divine revelation, or other very specialized input." I believe this understanding of the discipline is exemplified by philosophers from Thales to Hegel and by many even after. And I believe it is also exemplified by many "non-philosophical" disciplines, in their highest theory, and I therefore feel justified in calling these highest parts of other studies "philosophical."

For instance, the concept of "health" occurs throughout medicine. But it is philosophical. When a medical reference book recently listed pregnancy as a disease (to be cured, of course, by abortion), there was no scientific experiment, observation, or instrument to refute it. Just "seems-to-me" philosophy. After all, if the condition of pregnancy has resulted in such excellent

Medieval theologians were even quicker to incorporate metaphysics and other philosophy. Bougerol says that, in Bonaventure's opinion, "...Theology

beings as you, dear reader, then how abnormal, how much of a "disease" can it be? The same can be said of "mental health." There is a Freudian philosophy, a Jungian, and a Hippocratic philosophy, though the physicians may object violently that the concept of "health" *belongs* to the School of Medicine and *not* to the School of Philosophy. Ask them to define "health." As they stammer out hard-to-define generalities, "normal", "satisfactory", "appropriate", "good" having *nothing* to do with measurement by scientific instruments or with empirical verification in general, you will perceive the strong family resemblance to the clan of *philosophical* concepts, from which it was kidnapped long ago. And there could be theologies arising from all these "medical" philosophies, Freudian, Adlerian, etc.. In many sciences, the concept of the Uniformity of Nature, though it is clearly philosophical, was abundantly, usefully, employed. "Since the Renaissance, the principle of uniformity in nature has become the basis of science and induction." ("Uniformity" F. Selvaggi, *New Catholic Encyclopedia*.) Logical Positivism was a school which attempted to purify science from philosophy. But even Moritz Schlick, one of the founders of Logical Positivism believed, if similar events did not occur in a uniform way, there would be no basis for inductive knowledge. (M. Schlick, *Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre*, (Berlin, 1918), p. 330.) Now it is recognized as philosophical and is soft-pedaled by scientists. But it lurks there still. Schlick's associates in the school of Logical Positivism tried to remove all "metaphysics" (e.g. "Uniformity of Nature") from science. And behold, there was nothing left! Literature has structuralism and deconstructionism. If anyone cared to elaborate them, we could have structuralist and deconstructionist theologies. Sir William Blackstone, (in the study of law, the rival of Jeremy Bentham, founder of Utilitarianism) whose *Commentaries on the law of England are the basic text of English – and American – Common Law*, says, "All law must be reasonable." Succinct and very wise but blatantly philosophical. It is the ethical doctrine called "Natural Law." Why not a Blackstonian moral *theology*? We have a full-fledged system of Consequentialist moral theology, in the works of Richard A. McCormick .S.J. and others, which sprang from his adversary, Bentham's, Utilitarian philosophy. Instead of "Consequentialist," it could just as well be called "Benthamist," and have a Blackstonian natural-law ethic as a rival. Although Blackstonians, if they were British lawyers, might not like the *words*, "natural-law.". A physicist, Thomas Kuhn, has said that scientific truth is whatever scientists agree on. "There is, according to Kuhn, 'no standard higher than the assent of the relevant community'." (*The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 1962, quoted in *N.Y. Times*, July 20, 2001, p. B 11.) In a later book, (*The Road Since Structure*, U of Chicago P, 2001), he states that the world has an objective existence, that it is not invented or constructed. He is accused of inconsistency on this (*N.Y. Times*, 7/20/01, p. B11) but, in any case, he is deep into philosophy. Or at least, into philosophy as I – and most, I think – have understood it. How can the physics laboratory demonstrate the existence of the world, when the existence of the laboratory is itself challenged?

These crypto-philosophies usually serve well enough to organize and defend their particular branches of study, although they often conceal a partisan agenda (Cf. above, pregnancy as "disease"! ). If their enthusiasts extend them into other areas, they usually encounter difficulties.

Philosophy is almost the *only* source material for theologians. Truly non-philosophical concepts can enter theology in an extremely peripheral manner. For instance, geology and the Deluge, paleontology and Eden, astronomy and the star of Bethlehem. Concepts and doctrines that can enter theology centrally and substantively are, with excellent reason, called "philosophical." Concepts like "God," "human nature," "deliberate human acts," "something befitting human nature," "right," "wrong," "guilt," "innocence," etc. are, in their origin and essence philosophical and only because they are, can they serve theology in any important way.



is free to use the conclusions and even the terms of any form of knowledge in order to make clear to us how, in all things, inwardly, *God lies hidden*."<sup>34</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor says: "And, therefore, when the theologian treats this question [matter in angels L. Gl.], he treats it either as a philosopher of nature, or as a metaphysician, since he can take the modes of all the sciences, because they are servants of his."<sup>35</sup>

Also:

... Philosophy *indeed* treats of things as they are in nature, or in the soul according to knowledge naturally placed there or also acquired, but theology, as a science founded on faith and revealed by the Holy Spirit, ...subjecting to itself philosophical knowledge and taking up from the natures of things as much as it needs to construct a mirror, through which there is made a representation of divine things; raises, in a way, a ladder....<sup>36</sup>

And also:

It is also clear how all forms of knowledge are the servants of theology: wherefore this science assumes examples and makes use of expressions that belong to all kinds of knowledge.<sup>37</sup>

Ewert Cousins testifies of Bonaventure:

With 13<sup>th</sup> century genius for speculative synthesis, he produced a type of spiritual *summa* that integrates psychology, philosophy and theology.... And he balanced a richness of Biblical symbolism with abstract philosophical speculation. In no other medieval Christian spiritual writer were such diverse elements present in such depth and abundance and within such an organic systematic structure.<sup>38</sup> Scholastic thought in the Middle Ages has been compared to a Gothic cathedral ...his [Bonaventure's, L. Gl.] theology and philosophy provide the equivalent of this structure....<sup>39</sup>

Gilson adds, of the same doctor:

<sup>34</sup> J. Bougerol (deVrink), p. 167. [English translations with a footnote, like this one, have been taken from a source, here deVrink] *interius latet ipse Deus*.

<sup>35</sup> Bonaventure, *In Lib. Sent.*, II, d.3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, conclus.; II, 97. [English translations without a footnote, like this one following footnote number 45, have been done L. Gl.] "Et ideo, cum hanc quaestionem tractat theologus, aut pertractat eam sicut *naturalis*, aut sicut *metaphysicus*, quia ipse potest accipere modos omnium scientiarum, cum ei famulentur...."

<sup>36</sup> Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, "Prologus:" ...Philosophia quidem agit de rebus, ut sint in natura, seu in anima secundum notitiam naturaliter insitam, vel etiam acquisitam; sed theologia, tamquam scientia super fidem fundata et per Spiritum sanctum revelata, ...substernens sibi philosophicam cognitionem et assumens de naturis rerum, quantum sibi opus est ad fabricandum speculum, per quod fiat repraesentatio divinorum; quasi scalam erigit...

<sup>37</sup> Bonaventure (tr. DeVrink), *Retracing arts*, n. 26, p. 31.

<sup>38</sup> Cousins, "Introduction," *Bonaventure* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), p. 2.

<sup>39</sup> Cousins, "Introduction," *Bonaventure*, p. 16.

No thirteenth century thinker set himself more systematically to reduce the sciences to theology and put them entirely at its service; and no one took more literally than he the mission entrusted by the Popes to the University of Paris: Theology commands the others as their queen and they obey her as servants.<sup>40</sup>

Ignatius Brady, the distinguished Bonaventurian, says,

In a word, says Bonaventure, "the credible as intelligible" is the subject of the theologian, who uses not only logic but all the profane sciences to penetrate the data of the faith. By reason of such a goal, the theologian borrows from philosophy whatever he may need to give a full account of God, man, and the world as viewed with the eyes of faith...The theology that is the result is much broader in content than that which is included under that title today. Philosophy does not stand in contrast to theology, but is incorporated into it ...<sup>41</sup>

Medievals did not see philosophy as something alien to theology but as its handmaiden and ingredient. Moderns do see it as alien but end up using it and being greatly influenced by it.

When St. Bonaventure is discussed, the usual accusation is *not* of an excess of philosophy or of too much natural-level thought. The usual objection is that he theologizes everything and has no true philosophy at all. For instance, his theory of knowledge puts the Second Person of the Most Blessed Trinity at the center of human knowing, thus teaching a theology of knowledge rather than a philosophy.

In support of the usual, opposite difficulty, that St. Bonaventure's "philosophy" is really all theology, I quote Bougerol, Gilson, and Bonaventure himself. Bougerol says that, for Bonaventure, "...True metaphysics is centered upon Christ; it will be the same with true logic, for the principle of being and knowing is one....Here we are in the thick of theology, in the fullness of the analogy of faith. Christ becomes the minor of our reasoning....The whole of natural philosophy thus speaks to us of Christ, the Word of God, born and incarnate,..."<sup>42</sup>

"Natural philosophy, indeed, has for object the understanding of the formal reasons of things as they exist in the objects themselves, in the mind that knows them, and in divine wisdom, in which they find their Exemplar. Under all three aspects natural philosophy brings us back to the Word made flesh . .

"Moral philosophy, finally, may also be reduced to the light of theology, for its purpose is rectitude. Now what is right is what is found between two extremes, as the Word is the central figure of the Trinity, the One through whom all things proceeded from God and return to him."<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Gilson, p. 437. *theologia imperat aliis ut domina et illae sibi ut famulae obsequuntur.*

<sup>41</sup> Brady, "Bonaventure, St." ("Theological doctrine" ), *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, II, p.660.

<sup>42</sup> J. Bougerol, *Introduction to the works of Bonaventure*, tr. J. de Vrink (Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Guild, 1964), p. 78.

<sup>43</sup> J. Bougerol (de Vrink), p. 167.

Also:...There are six different kinds [of light, L. Gl.]: the light of Sacred Scripture, the light of sense-perception, the light of the mechanical arts, the light of discursive philosophy, the light of natural philosophy, and the light of moral philosophy.<sup>44</sup>...And as all these lights have their origin in a single one, so all forms of knowledge are ordained to the knowledge of Sacred Scripture, contained within it, perfected in it, and directed through it to perfect illumination. The whole body of our knowledge, therefore, must rest in the knowledge of Sacred Scripture,...<sup>45</sup>

Zachary Hayes tells us:

...In the [Bonaventure's, L. Gl.] *Hexaemeron*.... All created existence and all knowledge of existent things are grounded in the eternal Word. But the Word became flesh; the universal ground of being and knowing is incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth. It follows that all knowledge ...is grounded in Christ...

...For Bonaventure, the principal metaphysical question coincides with the Christological question.<sup>46</sup>

Etienne Gilson agrees:

...Metaphysics has led into error all philosophers, even the wisest, when they had not the light of faith.... Philosophy leads to sciences above itself; he who would rest in it is in darkness.

What is true of metaphysics is not less true of logic and ethics. Logic finds its high point in rhetoric, with its disputes upon the useful and the harmful...Now man cannot know what is useful to him and what is prejudicial unless something is added to the knowledge he has by reason alone. The same is true for the science of the virtues, even as attained by the most perfect human ethic.<sup>47</sup>

Let us consider the very idea of philosophy. It cannot begin without Christ, for He is its object, and it cannot attain completion without Christ, for He is its end.<sup>48</sup>

Further proof that philosophy entered ancient and medieval Christian *theology*, come from Zachary Hayes:

In the ages after the New Testament period, Christians would develop Christologies and Christological issues in terms of diverse world views. The mark of the Stoic world view is unmistakably clear in the early Apologists as they develop their own form of Logos-Christology. Neo-Platonism has left a similar mark on Augustine, in the West, as well as on the works of the great Greek Fathers. High Scholasticism would feel the impact of Aristotle at virtually every level, and the dominant image of Christ which has remained with us to the present would be shaped largely through Aristotelian instruments. Throughout this history, we see the efforts of a religious experience to find an adequate self-understanding in

<sup>44</sup> Bonaventure, *On Retracing the Arts to Theology*, tr. J. deVrink, *The Works of Bonaventure*, III (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1966), no.6, p. 20.

<sup>45</sup> Bonaventure (transl. deVrink), *Retracing Arts*, no. 7, pp. 6f.

<sup>46</sup> Hayes, *The Hidden Center* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1992), p. 196.

<sup>47</sup> Gilson, *The philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, transl. I. Trethowan and F. Sheed (Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1965), p.91.

<sup>48</sup> Gilson, p. 431.

terms of a larger vision of the world; a vision which includes some concept of the nature of the world and of the human person. Thus, a religious experience comes into contact with a particular secular experience of the world and of humanity; and from out of the conversation between the two there emerges a style of theology and a particular form of Christology.<sup>49</sup>

The expressions, "particular secular experience of the world and of humanity," "vision of the world," and "world view" are evidently synonyms, precisely for "philosophy," especially when they are described as "Stoic," "Neo-Platonist," and "Aristotelian."

Also, Gilson speaks of "the theological Aristotelianism of Albert the Great," indicating that Aristotelianism entered into theology.<sup>50</sup>

To the present objection, that the six points of difference are all philosophical, not theological, I concede that there are philosophical elements present but it is very usual for philosophy to enter theology as an ingredient and to make it Neo-Platonist theology, Aristotelian theology, Hegelian Modernism, Existential Theology or some other. In my opinion, philosophy must *always* be part of *any* theology to give it universality and critical scientific status. Nothing, I believe, can take the place of the fire and immediacy of Scripture. But the Bible, instead of one whole theology, gives us many conflicting and partial theologies. The Fathers of the Church very early supply its fragmentary incompleteness with Stoic and Neo-Platonist philosophy.

My opinion on the close connection and even interpenetration of philosophy with theology is based on Christian tradition from Clement of Alexandria to Pius XII and Vatican Two. If you adopt the "trade union" mentality of the modern university, that is all unacceptable. There is a building with "Philosophy" carved over the door. Whatever is taught in that building by members of the philosophy union is philosophy, even though Existentialism, emphasizing individual persons and circumstances over universal laws, and expressed in plays, is much like literature and Linguistic Analysis, inquiring only how words are used, is much like lexicography. Another building is labeled "Theology" and is staffed by members of a different labor union, equally jealous of their livelihood and territory, even though the details of Moral Theology, once past the Ten Commandments, seem very like the ethic that is taught in the philosophy department and the commentaries on the Old Testament – possibly the New – have a strong likeness to the courses on the ancient Levant offered in

<sup>49</sup> Z. Hayes, *The Hidden Center* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1992), pp. 11f.

<sup>50</sup> Gilson, *Phil. of Bonaventure*, p. 21.

the Schools of History and of Oriental Languages and Culture.<sup>51</sup> Today Catholic theologians reject not only any intrusion from the School of Philosophy but even any supervision by the teaching Church.<sup>52</sup> The position of the Holy See seems to be that this is an *extremely* exclusive, extremely territorial (labor union) stance, and not a correct Catholic attitude.

This dissertation deals with *medieval* theology. Medievals saw a very close connection, even that philosophy was a necessary ingredient of theology. St. Bonaventure thought *good* philosophy had to be worked out as *part of* theology. Any separate philosophy would be wrong and erroneous.

The six points include the Doctors' differing use of Holy Scripture and of the Fathers of the Church, surely a theological topic (Point Six). They discuss their different kinds of theological science, demonstrative for St. Thomas, affective for St. Bonaventure (Point Five), and whether theology is, as Bonaventure says, the *only* science, of whether it is one of many, as Thomas holds. In holding the existence of non-theological sciences, the Dominican may be *less* theological than his Franciscan counterpart, but Point One does cite his opinions on the distinction of other sciences from, and their subordination to, theology. That may plausibly push it under the theological umbrella. And judgment about their theologies is itself a theological question since there is no higher science to judge it. Or, at least, medievals thought there was not. Various kinds of analogies are mentioned. These are used in natural theology but also in the supernatural theology of revelation. Exemplarism and illumination are mentioned (Point Two), which St. Bonaventure centers on the Second Person of the Most Blessed Trinity. St. Thomas' treatment of these is more philosophical. Perhaps Point Two is theological only on one side. Aristotelianism and Augustinian Neo-Platonism are mentioned (Point Four) but as ingredients in the constructing of theology.

I have relied on St. Bonaventure's more inclusive ideas of philosophy and theology. True, St. Thomas is more restrictive, separating the two sciences more. In some few places, I may be comparing the philosophy of St. Thomas to the theology of St. Bonaventure but that makes the comparison at least somewhat theological. In most places, the comparison is theological on both sides. I feel comfortable in concluding that the six points are *entirely* dedicated

<sup>51</sup> I applaud such departmental ex- and incursions. If the subject-matter of the various Schools were as pure and unrelated to anything as their devotees *claim* they are, there would be *no reason* for anyone to *study* such subjects except for the totally dedicated ones who, forsaking the world like Trappists, choose a life in sterile isolation. (Trappists, of course, live most abundantly, studying an Infinite Subject-Matter.) A totally philosophy-free School of Theology would be a particularly fascinating oddity.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. lively debate on *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*.

to theology and to topics very closely related to theology and which profoundly influence theology. I hope this satisfactorily answers the objection.

### **Point One: Separate Epistemologies**

#### *1. St. Bonaventure: Intelligibility Equals Christ*

##### ST. BONAVENTURE'S UN-MODERN MIND

Before the explanation of Bonaventure's theology, a warning. To a modern mind, his ideas will seem strange and wrong. For him, all truth is found in God, in Christ, in Holy Scripture, in theology. In other subjects, like philosophy, truth is not merely incomplete or partial. It is incomplete and partial in the sense of being deficient, mutilated, false.

Today, we not only accept a distinction between religion and other activities but many expect religion to be pushed out of the public square and back into the cloister. Devotion, and even theology, are, to many secularistic modern minds, consoling daydreams, to be kept strictly separate from the serious business of study.

St. Bonaventure held just the opposite. Other subjects, mathematics, biology, politics, can be true if they are seen in Christ. Apart from him, as stated in the second point, they are false or sadly deficient. A very charitable modern might see this as a sign of touching devotion to the Lord. Many would see it as strange or eccentric.

Zachary Hayes points out the centrality of Christ to the Seraphic Doctor, strongly supporting our first point:

...Bonaventure asks where we are to begin our inquiry into the nature of reality if our work is to bear fruit. His answer is unambiguous. We must begin at the center of reality, and the center is Christ. If we begin at that center, we can come to know how all things come forth into being and how they are brought to completion. "Such is the metaphysical center that leads us back, and this is the whole of our metaphysics; namely, it is concerned with emanation, exemplarism, and consummation; that is, to be illumined by means of spiritual light and to be led back to the highest Being. And in this you will be a true metaphysician."<sup>53</sup>

This doctrine was called "Augustinianism" and it was held by many, especially Franciscans.

Tavard tells us what the Seraphic Doctor meant by "understanding:" "...To understand a point of faith is to place it in its proper setting in relation to oth-

<sup>53</sup> Hayes, Z. "Christology and Metaphysics in the Thought of Bonaventure." *Celebrating the medieval heritage: a colloquy on the thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure*. Ed. D. Tracy. *The Journal of Religion* 58, supplement (1978): p. S88.; St. Bonaventure, *Collations on the Six Days*, 1, 17 (*Works of Bonaventure*: Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1970, trans. J. de Vrink) vol 5, p. 332.

er points of faith, to Scripture, the tradition, the requirements of piety, reason, and spiritual aesthetics.”<sup>54</sup> Again, this supports Point One.

For St. Bonaventure, theology is an affective science since cognition, action, and passion are all united inseparably. Emotion is the moving force in all knowledge, which is a kind of action. He insists that emotion enters into theology in a special way, unlike the less moving truths of geometry:

Such is the knowledge which is taught in this book. For this knowledge aids faith, and faith is in the intellect in such a way that by its very nature it is oriented to move affectivity. And this is obvious. For the knowledge that Christ has died for us and similar knowledge moves a man to love unless he is unmovable in his sins. This is not knowledge like that other, that the diameter is incommensurate with a side.<sup>55</sup>

For the Seraphic Doctor, there is, ultimately, only one science, theology, as stated in Point One. All other studies are to be “reduced,” brought back<sup>56</sup> to this unity:

The way in an affective science is a journey from things perceived and ends sought by the mind to the source of truths and the inspiration of loves, which transcends and structures things and thoughts and which is itself supremely cognoscible and supremely lovable. From the point of view of the wayfarer or the mind there is only one such journey and, therefore, only one theology, one philosophy, one science. But despite this unity of science, men bring various emotional impediments to the journey. Bonaventura called one of his works *The Itinerary of the Mind to God*. All the works of Bonaventura are about that itinerary, treating

<sup>54</sup> Tavad, 49. See “Hierarchization,” Part one, Point Five, B and Part Two, Chap. 4, p. 249. I believe St. Thomas held much the same concept of “understanding.” A speaker at a philosophy convention said, while modern man means by “understanding,” taking a thing apart into its smallest elements, medieval man meant placing it in its proper place in the universe, either its metaphysical place among creatures, according to its perfection or its physical place in the geocentric universe. Some modern scientists seem to be returning to preferring context over disassembly:

“A . . . view, which Braithwaite labeled contextualism, holds that theoretical concepts have meaning that is wholly derived from the empirical consequences which can be drawn from the theory; meaning in this sense must be regarded as implicit or contextual, in contrast to the explicit empirical meaning of observables.” *Encyclopedia of philosophy*, “Models and analogy in science,” V, p.358.

<sup>55</sup> Bonaventure, *In I Sent.* Proemii, q. 3, conclus. (l: 13); cf. *De reductione artium ad theologiam* 26 (5:325b). Talis est cognitio tradita in hoc libro. Nam cognitio haec iuvat fidem, et fides sic est in intellectu, ut, quantum est de sui ratione, nata sit movere affectum. Et hoc patet. Nam haec cognitio, quod Christus pro nobis mortuus est, et consimiles, nisi sit homo peccator et durus, movet ad amorem; non sic ista: quod diameter sit asymeter costae.

<sup>56</sup> Beware of confusion: in the U.S.A., “reduce” is used of prices and of body weight and means only “to lessen.” “Reducere” in Latin is “to lead back.” The arts are not to be “downgraded to the lower level” of theology but to be led back, re-connected with their source. Sister Emma Healy says well “retraced to.” L. Gl.

different cognitive, emotive, and practical aspects of problems encountered on it, different orders and relations of things known, and different faculties of the mind, which are the sources of the problems and of their solutions.<sup>57</sup>

The idea of an "affective science" will be treated under Point Five of the first part. At present, let us consider only the *unity* of all science. University administrators of today would be alarmed to hear that all the departments must teach theological mathematics, theological psychology, theological everything. Or otherwise, be teaching nonsense. Bonaventure is far from current fashion.

## ST. BONAVENTURE'S THEOLOGY

### The Only True Wisdom

As a teaching Master in the Paris Faculty of Theology, St. Bonaventure could not follow the symbolic exegesis of preceding generations, the object of which was the *credibile ut credibile* (the believable as believable). His object now had to be the *credibile ut intelligibile* (the believable as intelligible. – Almost the *credibile ut Aristotelicum*!). But his theological thought was still done under the light of faith and its object was the *credibile* of scriptural revelation.

*Ut intelligibile*, "as intelligible," meant that something found in revelation was brought under the principles of philosophy, and was, in this way, given a clear explanation, and made *intelligible*. The resulting knowledge did not have the authority of pure revelation or of pure faith. It was an interpretation of faith. Philosophy had entered into it. This combination of faith and philosophy was theology, a unified, ordered discussion of the things of God, truly a science.<sup>58</sup>

An example of St. Bonaventure's acquaintance with, and use of, Aristotelian concepts, is his employment of the four causes. The Seraphic Doctor, in the introduction to his commentary on the *Sentences*, asks about the four causes of theology, material, formal, final and efficient. The material cause or subject matter includes everything. The radical "material" subject is God, the integral subject, Christ, and the universal subject is whatever thing or sign is credible, so far as it is made intelligible to reason, including books and particularly the book Bonaventure is commenting on, Lombard's *Book of Sentences*. The formal cause or mode of proceeding is investigative or ratiocinative, since in that way we are able to refute the enemies of the faith, to nurture the weak, and to delight the perfect. The final cause of theology is both contemplation

<sup>57</sup> McKeon, p. S33. McKeon retains the Latin spelling of the Seraphic Doctor's name: "Bonaventura."

<sup>58</sup> McCool, p.384.



and, more importantly, making us good. The efficient cause of the book being worked on is Peter Lombard. Granted, Lombard includes the words of others, but he states his own thoughts primarily and adds the teaching of others for confirmation. That makes him the efficient cause, not just a compiler.<sup>59</sup>

St. Bonaventure not only spoke of the mind's journey to God but also of leading back all the courses of study to theology. "That which is posterior must be reduced to that which is prior in the same category of being."<sup>60</sup> "This general principle, drawn from Aristotle,<sup>61</sup> is given an expressly Christian content."<sup>62</sup> Without this "leading back," they would be false or, at least, gravely deficient.

Bonaventure "reduced" – led back – all of the sciences to theology and theology to the mystical possession of God. This was not simply because any knowledge which stopped short of God's revelation in Christ *and which attempted completeness and autonomy* [emphasis added – L. Gl.] was finally false.... As Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, is the reality in which all things are created, so to know them in any depth is to know them in him. He is the medium of all sciences. It would be difficult to exaggerate the centrality of Christ in Bonaventure. He is the ultimate intelligibility or meaning of each thing – and so the inquiry of any science only reaches a definitive or stable grasp of its subject matter when it is found in its relationship to Christ, the integral subject of theology.<sup>63</sup>

Bonaventure's emphasis on Jesus Christ as center is a radical step in a new direction. Since Christ is the One in whom ultimate truth and goodness is found, it is Christ and not the Father who is the metaphysical ground of reality. True knowledge is no longer associated with objective universals: rather, it is now identified on the level of the singular, the person of Jesus Christ. Since the basis of all knowledge is eternally generated by a personal relationship of love between the Father and Son, true knowledge is contingent on love, that is, there is no knowledge without relationship or participation in the other through sharing of the good.<sup>64</sup>

These quotations from Buckley and Delio establish the Christ-centered intelligibility of Point One and strongly suggest its unity of science.

<sup>59</sup> Bonaventure, "Prooemium" *Commentarium in 4 Libros Sententiarum*. Quaracchi: 1882. I: 6-15. Cf. McKeon, S31.

<sup>60</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 1, a. 2, q. 3, resp. (transl. Z. Hayes); III, p. 30; Cf. Z. Hayes, *The Hidden Center* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute), p. 168.

<sup>61</sup> Aristotle, *II Metaphysics*, text 4.

<sup>62</sup> Hayes, *Hidden Center*, p. 168.

<sup>63</sup> Buckley, M. "Toward the Construction of Theology: Response to Richard McKeon," *Celebrating the medieval heritage; a colloquy on the thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure*. Ed. D. Tracy. *The Journal of Religion*, 58 supplement (1978): pp. S53f. On Christ as the medium of all sciences: "Secundo docet, ubi debet incipere: quia a medio, quod est Christus: quod medium si negligatur, nihil habetur." *In hexaem.* 1:1 (5:329); in Buckley, S54, n.6. "In the second place, it teaches where to begin, from the medium, which is Christ: and if the medium is neglected, nothing is had."

<sup>64</sup> I. Delio, "Bonaventure's Metaphysics of the Good," *Theological Studies*, 60 (June, 1999), pp. 242f.

What is the "reduction to theology?" Bonaventure uses the term in varying contexts. Gilson found five different ones. But "reduction" always pertains to a something which is incapable of standing entirely on its own and needs a reference to something else, from which it is still essentially distinct. Reduction gives a foundation to something which would otherwise lack one. The Word "...is the metaphysical Center that leads us back, and this is the sum total of our metaphysics ...illumination through spiritual radiations and return to the Supreme Being."<sup>65</sup>

Buckley tells us:

A few quotations from the works of the Franciscan Master will show how worthless he considers any knowledge apart from Christ:

My two translations – "The philosophical science is the way to other sciences; but he who wishes to stay there falls into darkness."<sup>66</sup> "Hence all who lack this faith have their hand cut off."<sup>67</sup>

And thus it is clear how *the multiform wisdom of God* (Eph. 3:10), which is lucidly handed down in Holy Scripture, lies hidden in all knowledge and in every nature. It is also clear how all kinds of knowledge serve theology; and therefore she takes examples and uses words pertaining to every kind of knowledge. It is also clear, how full is this way of illumination and how in everything that is sensed or known, God lies hidden within.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Bonaventure, *In hexaem.*, 1:17 (5:332J); *Works*, V, 10, trans. J. de Vrink. "Anzitutto va ricordato che s. Bonaventura usa il termine *reductio* in contesti molto differenti (Gilson ne conta ben cinque). Ma in fondo, la *reductio* è sempre propria di una realtà incapace di sussistenza assoluta e bisognosa di un riferimento ad altro da cui è, pertanto, essenzialmente distinta. Quindi, la *reductio* prende la dimensione di una vera e propria *mediazione* (fondazione e razionalizzazione) del *dato* che altrimenti resterebbe infondato." Fernando Gneo, "*La reductio artium ad theologiam* secondo S. Bonaventura," in *Arts libéraux et philosophie au moyen-âge, Actes du Quatrième Congrès International de Philosophie Médiévale*, Montréal: Institut d'Etudes Médiévales, 1969, pp. 634-635. In Buckley, p. S54, n. 2 "Verbum ...est medium metaphysicum reducens, et haec est tota nostra metaphysica ...illuminari per radios spirituales et reduci ad summum."

<sup>66</sup> Bonaventure, *De donis Spiritus Sancti*, 4:4 (5: 475b-476a) in Buckley, S53n. "Philosophica scientia via est ad alias scientias; sed qui ibi vult stare cadit in tenebras."

<sup>67</sup> Bonaventure, *In hexaem.* 3:9 (5: 345a), *Works*, V, 47. "Unde omnes, qui non habet hanc fidem, manum habet amputatam."

<sup>68</sup> Bonaventure, *De reductione artium ad theologiam*, 26 (5:325b) *Works*, III, 31; cf. *ibid.* 7(5:322a). Cited in Buckley, S54, n. 2. Et sic patet, quomodo *multiformis sapientia Dei* (Eph. 3:10), quae lucide traditur in sacra Scriptura, occultatur in omni cognitione et in omni natura. Patet etiam, quomodo omnes cognitiones famulantur theologiae: et ideo ipsa assumit exempla et utitur vocabulis pertinentibus ad omne genus cognitionis. Patet etiam, quam ampla sit via illuminative, et quomodo in omni re, quae sentitur sive quae cognoscitur, interius lateat ipse Deus.

It is our proposal to show that in Christ *are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge of God* (Col. 2:3). and he is the medium of all science.<sup>69</sup>

The remainder of this initial *Collatio* is devoted to demonstrating that Christ is the medium for metaphysics, physics, mathematics, logic, ethics, politics, and theology.<sup>70</sup> All this proves the Christocentrism of Point One and strongly suggests the unity of all science for St. Bonaventure.

Rightly therefore to Christ alone and not to another is attributed the authority of service, so that he be singularly called the one Teacher, because he is the fontal principle and the origin of human science. Therefore, as the sun is one but emits many rays, so, from one Teacher, Christ, the spiritual sun, multimorph and distinct rivulets go forth from one font, but the font is one which multiplies itself into so many rivulets without ceasing to be itself; so from one eternal font, from one teacher, Christ, the rivulets of the diverse sciences flow out, without his ceasing to be himself.<sup>71</sup>

In the second place he teaches where one ought to begin, which is from the medium, which is Christ. If this medium is neglected, nothing is had.<sup>72</sup>

Therefore the key of contemplation is the threefold intellect, to wit, the intellect of the uncreated Word, through which all things are produced; the intellect of the incarnate Word, through which all things are repaired; the intellect of the inspired Word, through which all things are revealed. Unless one can consider, of things, how they originate, how they are brought to their end, and how God shines forth in them, he cannot have understanding.<sup>73</sup>

All sciences, thus, are one, *at least* in their origin, Christ, the Word of God.

<sup>69</sup> *In hexaem.* 1:11 (5:331a); In Buckley, S54, n. 5. *Propositum igitur nostrum est ostendere quod in Christo sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae Dei absconditi* (Col. 2:3), et ipse est medium omnium scientiarum.

<sup>70</sup> Buckley, p. 54, n. 5.

<sup>71</sup> Bonaventure, *Sermo 1, Dominica XXII post Pentecostem*: "Magister scimus quia verax es et viam Dei in veritate doces" (9:442a); cf. "Christus, unus omnium magister" 7-9 (5:569a-b). In Buckley, S54, n.4. Merito igitur soli Christo et non alio attribuenda est auctoritas officii, ut singulariter *unus Magister* dicatur, eo quod ipse est fontale principium et origo scientiae humanae. Unde sicut unus est sol, tamen multos radios emittit; sic ab uno Magistro, Christo, sole spirituali, multimorphes et distincti rivuli ab uno fonte egrediuntur, unus tamen est fons, qui in tot rivulos sine sui defectibilitate (se) multiplicat; sic ab uno fonte aeterno ab uno Magistro, Christo, sine sui defectibilitate egrediuntur rivuli diversarum scientiarum.

<sup>72</sup> Bonaventure, *In Hexaem.* 1:1 (5:329) *Works* V, 1, In Buckley, p. S54, n. 6. "Secundo docet, ubi debet incipere: quia a medio, quod est Christus: quod medium si negligatur, nihil habetur."

<sup>73</sup> Bonaventure, *In hexaem.* 3:2 (5:343a) *Works*, V, 42; "For Christ as the integral subject of theology," cf. *In I Sent.* 'Prooemium' I (1:76). Clavis ergo contemplationis et intellectus triplex, scilicet intellectus Verbi increati, per quod omnia producuntur; intellectus Verbi incarnati, per quod omnia reparantur; intellectus Verbi inspirati, per quod omnia revelantur. Nisi enim quis possit considerare de rebus, qualiter originantur, qualiter in finem reducantur, et qualiter in eis refulget Deus, intelligentiam habere non potest.

## Theology, for St. Bonaventure, the Only Science

For the Seraphic Doctor, there is, ultimately, only one science, theology, as stated in Point One. All other studies are to be “reduced,” brought back to this unity:

The way in an affective science is a journey from things perceived and ends sought by the mind to the source of truths and the inspiration of loves, which transcends and structures things and thoughts and which is itself supremely cognoscible and supremely lovable. From the point of view of the wayfarer or the mind there is only one such journey and, therefore, only one theology, one philosophy, one science. But despite this unity of science, men bring various emotional impediments to the journey. Bonaventura called one of his works *The Itinerary of the Mind to God*. All the works of Bonaventura are about that itinerary, treating different cognitive, emotive, and practical aspects of problems encountered on it, different orders and relations of things known, and different faculties of the mind, which are the sources of the problems and of their solutions.<sup>74</sup>

Only theology is a complete science, a “scientia perfecta: ...quia incipit a primo, quod est primum principium, et pervenit ad ultimum, quod est prae-mium aeternum...”. It completes what philosophy cannot:

For it alone is *perfect wisdom*, which begins at the highest cause, as it is the principle of the things caused, where philosophical knowledge ends; and it passes through it, insofar as it is the remedy of sins; and leads back to it, so far as it is the prize of merits and the end of desires.<sup>75</sup>

As said in Point One, for the Seraphic Doctor, there is only one science, theology.

While St. Thomas holds there are many ways of knowing, depending on the diversity of the subject matter,<sup>76</sup> St. Bonaventure, on the other hand, says there is one way, dependent on the unity of the mind, of the Divine Mind, basis of all knowledge, including the human:

The gate of these things is the intellect of the Uncreated Word, which is the root of the understanding of all things; therefore, he who does not have this gate, cannot enter. Philosophers can never grasp the things which are supremely true, since the gate is closed to them.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>74</sup> McKeon, p. S33.

<sup>75</sup> Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, 1:1 (5:310a-b). In Buckley, p. S55, n. 7. Ipsa enim sola est *sapientia perfecta*, quae incipit a causa summa, ut est principium causatorum, ubi terminatur cognitio philosophica; et transit per eam, ut est remedium peccatorum; et reducit in eam, ut est praemium meritorum et finis desideriorum.

<sup>76</sup> McKeon, pp. S33f.

<sup>77</sup> Bonaventure, *In hexaem.*, 3:4 (5:343b) *Works V*, 42. Horum ostium est intellectus Verbi increati, qui est radix intelligentiae omnium; unde qui non habet hoc ostium, intrare non potest. Philosophi habent pro impossibili quae sunt summe vera, quia ostium est eis clausum.

So there is only one science, that is grasped through and in Christ; Point One, above. If philosophy can be called a science, for the Seraphic Doctor it is a deficient, invalid science, misleading rather than enlightening.

## 2. St. Thomas: Intelligibility in Creatures

### THE UNITY OF SCIENCES IN AQUINAS

St. Thomas does unify all sciences but not as completely as his Franciscan colleague. Buckley says, "Aquinas, in sharp contrast [to St. Bonaventure, L. Gl.], distinguishes irreducibly among the sciences in terms of their proper subject matter, but unites them theologically without annihilating these distinctions."<sup>78</sup> "What Aquinas is elaborating is an intimate unity without a reduction."<sup>79</sup>

For Aquinas, theology integrates the work of the other sciences like a medieval cathedral, not by identifying with them or transposing them into theology, but by giving them an order, a context in man's radical orientation towards truth, since it belongs to wisdom to give order and judgment.<sup>80</sup>

### THE DISTINCTION OF SCIENCES IN AQUINAS

While Bonaventure taught that theology was the only science, St. Thomas says other sciences exist and have their own first principles, independent of theology and of revelation.

This science can accept something from the philosophical disciplines, not that it needs them out of necessity, but for the greater manifestation of the things which are handed down in this science. For it does not accept its principles from other science, but immediately from God through revelation. And therefore it does not receive from other sciences as from superiors, but uses them as an architectonic science uses subservient sciences, as the civil uses the military. And this, that it so uses them, is not because of a defect or insufficiency of itself, but because of a defect of our intellect; which, by the things which are known by natural reason (from which the other sciences proceed), is more easily led, as by the hand, to those things which are above reason, which in this science are handed down.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Buckley, p. S55.

<sup>79</sup> Buckley, p. S56.

<sup>80</sup> Buckley, p. S56; "Cum enim sapientis sit ordinare et iudicare . . ." Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I, 1, 6. Cf. *In meta.*, Prooemium. Buckley, pl. S 56, and n. 11.

<sup>81</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theol.*, I, 1, 5, ad 2. In Buckley, P. S56, n.10. ...Haec scientia accipere potest aliquid a philosophicis disciplinis, non quod ex necessitate eis indigeat, sed ad maiorem manifestationem eorum quae in hac scientia traduntur. Non enim accipit sua principia ab aliis scientiis, sed immediate a Deo per revelationem. Et ideo non accipit ab aliis scientiis tanquam a superioribus, sed utitur eis tanquam inferioribus et ancillis; sicut architectonicae utuntur

However inferior and enslaved these other sciences may be to the divine science, they do exist and function, even in the service of theology.

#### THE SUBORDINATION OF SCIENCES IN AQUINAS

Theology, resting upon divine revelation, is superior to the other sciences and judges them false if they contradict its teaching. But it does not supply the principles of the other sciences.

The principles of other sciences are either known of themselves and cannot be proven: or they are proved by some natural reason in some other science. But the proper knowledge of this science is that which is from revelation: not that which is from natural reason. And therefore, it does not belong to it to prove the principles of other sciences but only to judge concerning them: whatever is found in other sciences opposed to the truth of this science, is entirely condemned as false: therefore it is said in II Corinthians, 10:4, destroying the counsels and all greatness raising itself up against the knowledge of God.<sup>82</sup>

In contradiction to St. Bonaventure's doctrine that there was only one science, theology, St. Thomas says other sciences exist and have their own first principles, independent of theology and of revelation. They are merely not free to contradict revelation or theology. A *Magna Carta* for the baron-sciences, under the Theology-Queen!

#### DOES AQUINAS INCLUDE OTHER MATTERS IN THEOLOGY?

St. Thomas does not "lead back" all sciences (or arts) to theology, so as to leave us with only one science. But he does, like Bonaventure, extend the scope or extent of theology beyond God alone. Not quite the unifier his Franciscan colleague was, he is still somewhat inclusive, somewhat unifying, as he says:

The object of any cognitive habit has two things: viz., that which is materially known, which is like the material object; and that through which it is known, which is the formal aspect of the object. As in the science of geometry, the conclusions are materially known; but the means of demonstration are the formal

subministrantibus, ut civilis militari. Et hoc ipsum quod sic utitur eis, non est propter defectum vel insufficientiam eius, sed propter defectum intellectus nostri; qui ex his quae per naturalem rationem (ex qua procedunt aliae scientiae) cognoscuntur, facilius manuducitur in ea quae sunt supra rationem, quae in hac scientia traduntur.

<sup>82</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* I, 1, 6 ad 2. Aliarum scientiarum principia vel sunt per se nota, et probari non possunt: vel per aliquem rationem naturalem probantur in aliqua alia scientia. Propria autem huius scientiae cognitio est, quae est per revelationem: non autem quae est per naturalem rationem. Et ideo non pertinet ad eam probare principia aliarum scientiarum, sed solum iudicare de eis: quidquam enim in aliis scientiis invenitur veritati huius scientiae repugnans, totum condemnatur ut falsum: unde dicitur II Cor. 10:4: consilia destruentes, et omnem altitudinem extollentem se adversus scientiam Dei.

reason of knowing, through which the conclusions are known. So therefore in faith, if we consider the formal aspect of the object, it is nothing other than the first truth: for the faith of which we speak assents to anything only because it is revealed by God; therefore it depends on the divine truth itself as on a means. But if we consider materially that to which faith assents, it is not only God himself, but also many other things. These fall under the assent of faith only according as they have some order to God: so far, that is, man is helped by some effects of the Divinity to tend to the enjoyment of God.<sup>83</sup>

Theology includes, for Aquinas, more than God alone. He is, perhaps, slightly Bonaventurian. But there is a significant difference between the theologies of the two Doctors.

#### EXCURSUS: VATICAN II AND POPE JOHN PAUL II ON THE AUTONOMY OF SCIENCES; A SEPARATION OF FAITH AND REASON.

A different view from St. Bonaventure's is voiced by Vatican II's *The Church in the Modern World*.

Culture, since it flows from man's rational and social nature, has continual need of rightful freedom of development and a legitimate possibility of autonomy according to its own principles. Quite rightly it demands respect and enjoys a certain inviolability, provided, of course, that the rights of the individual and the community, both particular and universal, are safeguarded within the limits of the common good.

Calling to mind the teaching of the first Vatican Council, this sacred Synod declares that "there are two orders of knowledge" distinct from one another, faith and reason, and that the Church is not against "the use of human arts and sciences of their own principles and methods in their respective fields;" therefore, "it acknowledges this lawful freedom" and affirms the legitimate autonomy of culture and especially of the sciences."<sup>84</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, 1, 1. Utrum objectum fidei sit veritas prima?...cuiuslibet cognoscitivi habitus objectum duo habet: scilicet it quod materialiter cognoscitur, quod est sicut materiale objectum; et id per quod cognoscitur, quod est formalis ratio objecti. Sicut in scientia geometriae materialiter scita sunt conclusiones; formalis vero ratio sciendi sunt media demonstrationis, per quae conclusiones cognoscuntur. Sic igitur in fide, si consideremus formalem rationem objecti, nihil est aliud quam veritas prima: non enim fides de qua loquimur assentit alicui nisi quia est a Deo revelatum; unde ipsi veritati divinae innititur tamquam medio. Si vero consideremus materialiter ea quibus fides assentit, non solum est ipse Deus, sed etiam multa alia. Quae tamen sub assensu fidei non cadunt nisi secundum quod habent aliquem ordinem ad Deum: prout scilicet per aliquos Divinitatis effectus homo adjuvatur ad tendendum in divinam fruitionem. Et ideo etiam ex hac parte objectum fidei est quodammodo veritas prima, inquantum nihil cadit sub fidei nisi in ordine ad Deum: sicut etiam obiectum medicinae est sanitas, quia nihil medicina considerat nisi in ordine ad sanitatem.

<sup>84</sup> Second Vatican Council, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, no. 59. *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-conciliar Documents*, ed. A. Flannery (Collegeville MN: The Liturgical Press) 1975.

Can we today accept St. Bonaventure's unity of all sciences in any way, to any degree? Today, we might seek the subordination of the sciences to Christ, which St. Bonaventure demands, not in the academy, but in the overall life of a Christian. There, in our whole, integrated life is where the recapitulation of all things in Christ, taught by St. Irenaeus, is to be hoped for. The same section of *The Church in the Modern World* quoted above says: "...The Church recalls to mind that culture must be subordinated to the integral development of the human person, to the good of the community and of the whole of mankind."<sup>85</sup> And, shortly afterward, the Council refers to the totality of the human person:

...It remains each man's duty to safeguard the notion of the human person as a totality in which predominate values of intellect, will, conscience, and brotherhood, since these values were established by the creator and wondrously restored and elevated by Christ."<sup>86</sup>

In that totality, the elevation by Christ is paramount. Here, in his life as a whole, the contemporary Christian ought to seek Bonaventurian Christocentrism. It will be difficult to find it in, or impose it on, the various studies of the university.

#### FAITH AND REASON: UNIFICATION OF FAITH AND REASON.

Pope John Paul II's encyclical is by no means a re-establishment of Bonaventurian dominance of faith over reason or an attack on St. Thomas, on Vatican II, or the centuries of Catholic thought between them. The Holy Father says, "Although they insisted upon the organic link between theology and philosophy, St. Albert the Great and St. Thomas were the first to recognize the autonomy which philosophy and the sciences needed if they were to perform well in their respective fields of research."<sup>87</sup>

If we changed the title to *Faith OR Reason*, making it a competition, it might seem that it is more in support of reason than of faith. Michael Novak says, "The encyclical's message to theologians and bishops is 'Without lively attention to reason, Judaism and Christianity fall into sentimentality, superstition, and stupid parodies of themselves.'<sup>88</sup> And also, "Today, the strongest and most unabashed defender of reason in the world appears to be the Pope. Voltaire, where art thou at this hour?"<sup>89</sup>

<sup>85</sup> *Church Modern*, n. 59.

<sup>86</sup> *Church Modern*, n. 61.

<sup>87</sup> *Faith and Reason*, n. 45, *N.Y. Times*, 10/16/98, p. A 10.

<sup>88</sup> M. Novak, "It's not all relative," *N.Y. Times*, 10/16/98, p. A 27.

<sup>89</sup> Novak, *ibid*.



Having avoided, I hope, any suggestion of a neo-Bonaventurian “reductio” of reason and philosophy to faith and theology, we may consider the Pope’s words on harmony and help between faith and reason. These statements, to me, seem reminiscent of the Seraphic Doctor:

34. This truth, which God reveals to us in Jesus Christ, is not opposed to the truths which philosophy perceives. On the contrary, the two modes of knowledge lead to truth in all its fullness. The unity of truth is a fundamental premise of human reasoning, as the principle of noncontradiction makes clear. Revelation renders this unity certain, showing that the God of creation is also the God of salvation history. It is the one and the same God who establishes and guarantees the intelligibility and reasonableness of the natural order upon which scientists confidently depend, and who reveals himself as the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. This unity of truth, natural and revealed, is embodied in a living and personal way in Christ....

45.... From the late medieval period onwards, however, the legitimate distinction between the two forms of learning became more and more a fateful separation. As a result of the exaggerated rationalism of certain thinkers, positions grew more radical and there emerged eventually a philosophy which was separate from and absolutely independent of the contents of faith....

In short, what for Patristic and Medieval thought was in both theory and practice a profound unity, producing knowledge capable of reaching the highest forms of speculation, was destroyed by systems which espoused the cause of rational knowledge sundered from faith and meant to take the place of faith.

48. This rapid survey of the history of philosophy reveals a growing separation between faith and philosophical reason....

56.... It is faith which stirs reason to move beyond all isolation and willingly to run risks so that it may attain whatever is beautiful, good, and true. Faith thus becomes the convinced and convincing advocate of reason.

Conclusion. 104.... A philosophy in which there shines even a glimmer of the truth of Christ, the one definitive answer to humanity’s problems, will provide a potent underpinning for the true and planetary ethics which the world now needs.<sup>90</sup>

Perhaps the world also needs a little more harmony between faith and philosophy, after centuries of antagonism. The Pope is milder than St. Bonaventure, in saying only that faith can help philosophy. But the history he cites, of faithless philosophy’s descent into despair of finding truth, supports, to some extent, the saint’s harsher judgment.

Michael Downey, professor of systematic theology and spirituality at St. John’s Seminary, Camarillo, California, also sees a Bonaventurian tendency in the encyclical: “Even though the pope emphasizes the importance of Thomas

<sup>90</sup> John Paul II, *Faith and Reason*, *N.Y. Times*, 10/16/98, p. A10.

Aquinas in the encyclical, his vision of the task of the theologian is really more in step with that of St. Bonaventure.”<sup>91</sup>

### 3. Summary of Point One

From the quotations provided, it is clear that St. Bonaventure differed from St. Thomas, as he does from the Second Vatican Council and most of us today, in holding that all science is found only in Christ and that there is only one science, the knowledge of the Word of God. St. Thomas does hold a unity of sciences and a subordination of all sciences to theology but not the complete reduction to unity which would say there is only one science. He says there are many, even though unified under theology. Here we find the two great Doctors having notably different theological doctrines.

### Point Two: An Uneven Use of Illumination and Exemplarism

The second point of difference between the two Doctors is: St. Bonaventure relies much more on divine exemplarity and divine illumination, the sources of intelligibility and of understanding (of ‘intellection’). St. Thomas believes in them but emphasizes them much less. The human mind has more independent intelligence and created things have more independent intelligibility than the Franciscan Master allows them.

The second point is closely connected with the first. The first point states that, for St. Bonaventure, understanding is found, basically, only in the Word, although the Word shares this intelligibility, to a very limited extent, with creatures and lends intelligence, again in a limited way, to created intellects. Thus intelligence and intelligibility is found in them, with close and constant dependence on the Word. The Word shares intelligibility through exemplarism and intelligence by illumination.

St. Thomas believes in exemplarism, that creatures imitate the Divine Ideas and that God gives support to created intellects in their operation, a support very similar to illumination. But he seems to grant creatures a much more independent intelligence and intelligibility and does not use the strong negative language which St. Bonaventure uses about attempts to understand apart from conscious dependence upon Christ, the Word of God.

<sup>91</sup> In P. Schaeffer, “Encyclical wins cautious praise,” *National Catholic Reporter*, 35, no. 2 (10/30/98), p.5.

## 1. Illumination

IN ST. BONAVENTURE

Illumination and exemplarism were characteristic of St. Bonaventure's theory of knowledge, especially of the knowledge of God. We can of ourselves know the nature and laws of material things. Sensible image and agent intellect explain that. Higher truths demand a higher source. Necessity, immutability, and eternity are characteristics of truth. But they cannot be explained by the activity of the agent intellect or of the whole soul. Both the sensible world and the human soul are temporal and changing. Immutability and necessity demand some contact with God. The intellect grasps God's presence in every eternal truth. This indirect apprehension is called *contuitio* of God.<sup>92</sup>

*God saw that the light was good. God separated the light from the darkness*, etc. It has been said that truth is intellectual light radiating over intelligence either human or angelical; and that it shines forth in a manner that cannot be stopped, for it cannot be thought of as non-existing. Now a thing may shine forth in three different ways: as the truth of an object, as the truth of an expression, or as proper behavior. As the truth of an object, it consists of conformity of existence with essence; as the truth of an expression, it is conformity of essence with thought; as proper behavior, it is righteous living. And this is clear on the part of the principle which sends forth light, of the subject which receives this light, and of the objective towards which it enlightens. As a cause of being, this light is powerful; as a reason of understanding, this light is clear; as an ordering of life, this light is good. And that is the reason why it is written: *God saw that the light was good*. As a *powerful* light, it irradiates for the sake of understanding substances or essences, the quantities and natures of the world; as a *clear* light, it irradiates for the sake of understanding rational expressions, reasonings and proofs; as a *good* light, it suffuses the intelligence, or demonstrates matters of propriety, activity, or justice.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>92</sup> F.-J. Thonnard, *A short history of philosophy*, Paris: Desclée, 1956, pp. 426ff. Cf. "Bonaventure, Saint," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

<sup>93</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaemer.* 5; 5: 353; *Works*, 5, 73f, trans. J de Vrink). *Vidit Deus lucem, quod esset valde bona, et divisit lucem a tenebris*, etc. Dictum est quod intellectualis lux est veritas, quae est radians super intelligentiam sive humanam, sive angelicam; quae inextinguibiliter irradiat, quia non potest cogitari non esse. Irradiat autem aliquid tripliciter: ut veritas *rerum*, ut veritas *vocum*, ut veritas *morum*: ut veritas *rerum* est divisio entis et *esse*, ut veritas *vocum*, est adequatio vocis et intellectus, ut veritas *morum* est rectitudo vivendi. Quod patet ex parte *principii*, quod irradiat; ex parte *subiecti*, quod irradiationem suscipit; ex parte *objecti*, ad quod irradiat. In quantum haec lux est *causa essendi*, est lux *magna*; in quantum est *ratio intelligendi*, est lux *clara*; in quantum est *ordo vivendi*, est lux *bona*; *vidit*, inquit, *Deus lucem, quod esset bona*. — Ut lux *magna* irradiat ad comprehensionem *substantiarum* sive *essentialium*, *figurarum* et *naturarum* *mundialium*; ut lux *clara* irradiat ad comprehensionem *locutionum*, *argumentationum*, *persuasionum* *rationalium*; ut lux *bona* irradiat super intelligentiam vel illustrat ad comprehensionem *modestiarum*, *industrialium*, *iustitiarum*.

## IN ST. THOMAS

The Angelic Doctor seems to see more power in natural things than the Seraphic and, correspondingly, less need for direct divine assistance, less need for illumination. The human intellect, in Thomas' view, seems to have a bit more power, more intelligence, and created objects, more intelligibility. Where the Franciscan saw a need for divine illumination, at least for humans to see universal laws in matter, the Dominican does not seem to perceive the same need.

However, Aquinas is not a total naturalist, wholly in opposition to the God-centered Bonaventure. One historian of philosophy says that, according to St. Thomas' teaching, "...God is present in each act of intellection *per contactum virtutis*, through His action and *physical premotion*, which is always required and which is similar to Augustinian *illumination*."<sup>94</sup> We may prefer the term "motion," to "premotion." But the basic idea is that we need God to help us know, according to St. Thomas as well as St. Bonaventure.

Illumination in Bonaventure is usually related to the intellect: Thomist divine motion, to the will. But the Franciscan speaks of illumination in the will:

...Truth is intellectual light radiating over intelligence either human or angelical; ...Now a thing may shine forth in three different ways, as the truth of an object, as the truth of an expression, or as proper behavior. ...As proper behavior, it is righteous living.<sup>95</sup>

...For she [Wisdom: L. Gl.] teaches moderation and prudence, justice and fortitude, and nothing in life is more useful to men than these.

These are impressed upon the soul by the said exemplary light, and they go down into the cognitive, the affective and the operative faculties. The sincerity of temperance is marked by the height of purity; the serenity of prudence by the beauty of clarity; the stability of constancy, by the strength of power; the sweetness of justice, by the straightness of diffusion. These are the four exemplary virtues...<sup>96</sup>

The above quotations show St. Bonaventure held illumination with regard to virtues and the will. Two citations from Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* will

<sup>94</sup> Thonnard, p. 428, n. 2.

<sup>95</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaem.* Coll. 5:l (5:353f); *The Works of Bonaventure* V, transl. J. de Vrink (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1966, p. 73. ...Intellectualis lux est veritas, quae est radians super intelligentiam, sive humanam, sive angelicam; ...Irradiat autem aliquid tripliciter: ut veritas rerum, ut veritas vocum, ut veritas morum:...ut veritas morum est rectitudo vivendi.

<sup>96</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaem.* 6: 9f (5:362); St. Anthony Guild, 5:99, transl. J. de Vrink. Sobrietatem enim et prudentiam et justitiam et virtutem docet [sapientia: L.Gl.], quibus utilius nihil est in vita hominibus. Haec imprimuntur in anima per illam lucem exemplarem et descendunt in *cognitivam*, in *affectivam*, in *operativam*. Ex celsitudine puritatis imprimitur *sinceritas temperantiae*; ex pulchritudine claritatis *serenitas prudentiae*; ex fortitudine virtutis *stabilitas constantiae*; ex rectitudine diffusionis, *suavitas iustitiae*. — Hae sunt quatuor virtutes *exemplares*.

show he held divine motion not only for the will but also for the intellect (and all created operations).

God is therefore the first cause, moving both natural causes and voluntary causes. And just as, in regard to natural causes, in moving them, he does not take from them that their actions be natural, so, in moving voluntary causes, he does not take from them that their actions be voluntary but rather makes them so: for he operated in each one according to its property.<sup>97</sup>

Wherefore he moves all things according to their condition: so that from necessary causes through divine motion, effects follow out of necessity; but from contingent causes, effects follow contingently.<sup>98</sup>

Where St. Thomas speaks of “moving” and “motion,” many today speak only of “physical *premotion*.” The expression is associated with D. Bañez, although others may have used it before him.<sup>99</sup> K. Rahner says, “The kernel of his [Bañez’s] doctrine is the necessity and nature of *praemotio physica* for any action of a creature, not only for a positively salutary act.”<sup>100</sup>

The above is not meant to show an identity between St. Bonaventure’s illumination and St. Thomas’ divine motion (often called “physical *premotion*”) – St. Thomas attributes much more self-sufficiency to the natural order than does Bonaventure – but only that there are some important similarities and that the differences between them ought not to be exaggerated.

## 2. Exemplarism

### IN ST. THOMAS

St. Thomas held that the perfections of creatures pre-exist in the mind of God.

...Whatever perfection is in the effect, must be found in the effective cause: ... Therefore, since God is the first effective cause of things, the perfections of all things must pre-exist in God in a more eminent way.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.* I, 83, 1, ad 3. Deus igitur est prima causa movens et naturales causas et voluntarias. Et sicut naturalibus causis, movendo eas, non auferat quin actus earum sint naturales; ita movendo causas voluntarias, non aufert quin actiones earum sint voluntariae, sed potius hoc in eis facit: operatur enim in unoquoque secundum eius proprietatem.

<sup>98</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I-II, 10, 4. Unde omnia movet secundum eorum conditionem: ita quod ex causis necessariis per motionem divinam consequuntur effectus ex necessitate; ex causis autem contingentibus sequuntur effectus contingenter.

<sup>99</sup> “The attribution to Bañez even among authors of the Molinist school is by no means universal; F. Suarez points rather to De Medina as the author of physical *premotion* (*De auxiliis* 7.2; Vivès 11.; 183), even at one point assigning the doctrine to St. Thomas (*De concursu Dei cum voluntate* 11.6; Vivès 11:50); Victor Frins, SJ, in his reply to Dummermuth traces the teaching back to F. de Vitoria.” W.J.Hill “Bañez and Bañezianism,” *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, v. II, p.49b.

<sup>100</sup> K. Rahner, “Grace and Freedom,” *Sacramentum Mundi: An encyclopedia of theology* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1969), vol 6, p. 424.

<sup>101</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 4, a. 2, c. ...Quidquid perfectionis est in effectu, oportet inveniri in causa effectiva: ...Cum ergo Deus sit prima causa effectiva rerum, oportet omnium

These perfections, pre-existing in God, are the exemplary Ideas. Aquinas here follows, to some extent, Plato, but much more the Neoplatonists, especially St. Augustine, and agrees with St. Bonaventure.

For, since every agent, so far as it is an agent, produces something similar to itself, and everything acts according to its own form, it is necessary that there be a likeness of the form of the agent in the effect.... If therefore there is some agent which is not contained in a genus, its effects resemble, even more remotely, the likeness of the form of the agent: not, however, in such a way that they participate in the likeness of the form of the agent according to the nature of the species or genus, but according to some analogy, as "to be" itself is common to all.<sup>102</sup>

Thus, God's effects (all creatures) are like him. He, and his Ideas are their exemplars.

...Since God is the cause of things through his knowledge, as has been said, the knowledge of God extends as far as his causality ...For, since he knows things other than himself through his own essence, insofar as it is the likeness of things as their active principle, it is necessary that his essence be the sufficient principle of knowing all things which are made through him,...<sup>103</sup>

Thus, the divine essence, known through the divine ideas, is the exemplar of all creatures, the source of their being and intelligibility.

In affirming exemplarity, St. Thomas agrees with St. Bonaventure. He differs from him in allowing creatures some intelligibility of their own. This is derived from God, of course. But the creature can be said to be truly intelligible. Bonaventure, on the other hand, says that, in themselves, they are *not* intelligible. They are intelligible only in the Word of God.

rerum perfectiones praeexistere in Deo secundum eminentiorem modum.

<sup>102</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 4, a. 3, c. Cum enim omne agens agit simile sibi inquantum est agens, agit autem unumquodque secundum suam formam, necesse est quod in effectu sit similitudo formae agentis.... Si igitur sit aliquod agens, quod non in genere continetur, effectus eius adhuc magis accedent remote ad similitudinem formae agentis: non tamen ita quod participant similitudinem formae agentis secundum eandem rationem speciei aut generis [as when the effect is of the same species or genus as the cause; L.Gl.], sed secundum aliqualem analogiam, sicut ipsum esse est commune omnibus.

<sup>103</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 14, a. 11, c. ...Cum Deus sit causa rerum per suam scientiam, ut dictum est, intantum se extendit scientia Dei, inquantum se extendit eius causalitas. ... Cum enim sciat alia a se per essentiam suam, inquantum est similitudo rerum velut principium activum earum, necesse est quod essentia sua sit principium sufficiens cognoscendi omnia quae per ipsum fiunt ...

## IN ST. BONAVENTURE

In general

Even when thinking on a philosophical level, the Franciscan master made exemplarism central. Zachary Hayes says:

We have seen, in the last of Bonaventure's writings,<sup>104</sup> how the metaphysical question is most sharply focused in the problem of exemplarity so that the entire work of philosophy moves to one goal, namely, to know the one divine essence as the exemplary cause of finite reality. The philosopher, therefore, approaches reality in terms of a threefold causality [efficient, exemplary, and final: L. Gl.] and brings his task to its goal when he perceives that this threefold causality is that of one principle who is the exemplar of all else.<sup>105</sup>

Fr. Hayes tells us Bonaventure is convinced:

...that the concerns of philosophical metaphysics are centered around the question of exemplarity, so that only in the light of exemplarity will the deepest nature of created reality be unlocked for the philosopher.<sup>106</sup>

There are strict limits to what the philosopher can achieve:

In carrying out his work, the philosopher can deal with the essential attributes of God and with attributes common to the three persons of the Trinity, but beyond this he cannot go. A more complete delineation of the meaning of these attributes must await the revelation of Sacred Scripture, to which the metaphysician must be open.<sup>107</sup>

Asking if ideas are to be placed in God, St. Bonaventure begins with the authority of St. Augustine "Ideas are the eternal, unchangeable forms, which are contained in the divine intelligence."<sup>108</sup> He goes on to say, "...The likeness of a thing, through which the thing is known and is produced, is the idea..."<sup>109</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaemer*.

<sup>105</sup> Hayes, "Christology and Metaphysics in the Thought of Bonaventure," *Celebrating the medieval heritage: a colloquy on the thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure*, ed. D. Tracy, *The Journal of Religion* 58 supplement (1958): S87.

<sup>106</sup> Hayes, *ibid*. "See also J. Ratzinger, *The theology of history in St. Bonaventure*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1971, pp. 134ff. for a treatment of the problem of exemplarity in relation to Bonaventure's attitude toward Aristotle." Hayes, S87.

<sup>107</sup> Hayes, *ibid*.

<sup>108</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.* I, d. 35, art. unicus, q. 1, fund. 1. The original of St. Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus* 83, q. 46, n. 2, instead of "aeternae," says, "principales.": "Ideae sunt formae aeternae et incommutabiles, quae in divina intelligentia continentur."

<sup>109</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, I, d. 35, art. unicus, q. 1, fund. 2. "...Similitudo rei, per quam res cognoscitur et producit, est idea..."

After telling us that the Seraphic Doctor insists we must begin our search for knowledge at the center of all reality, which is Christ, the source and completion of all things, Zachary Hayes continues:

The whole of the first collation on the *Hexaemeron* is a compact presentation of the seriousness with which Bonaventure takes this. The metaphysical question coincides with the christological question in as far as the problem of exemplarity, which is focused on metaphysics at the philosophical level, is related to the exemplarity of the Word incarnate in Jesus Christ. Already early in his career Bonaventure had had the conviction that the person of Jesus Christ lay at the center of reality. Here in his final work we find the extent to which that conviction has been worked out.<sup>110</sup>

The mystery of the person of Jesus Christ and the integral relationship between Christ and the Trinity that Bonaventure describes provides the basis of a Christian metaphysics based on the self-diffusive good. Bonaventure's metaphysics is *theological* because he sees the mystery of the Father intertwined with the mystery of the Son, the union of which is expressed in the person of the Spirit.<sup>111</sup>

Only by placing exemplary Ideas at the center of all creation, could St. Bonaventure remain faithful to his Augustinian, Neo-Platonist teachers, as will be discussed under Point Four.

#### The Holy Trinity and Exemplarism in St. Bonaventure

Unlike St. Thomas, who placed exemplary ideas in the Divine Nature, the Franciscan's exemplarism involved the Persons of the Trinity.

St. Bonaventure's scientific theology, although ordered by the universal principles of philosophy, did not exclude symbolic exegesis of the Bible or a mystical ascent to God. The elements of his theology which made this possible were his vision of the soul as the image of the Triune God and his dynamic theology of the Holy Trinity, learned from the Greek Fathers. These account for the central place, in his theology, of exemplarism and illumination.<sup>112</sup> These are mentioned in Point Three.

Hayes mentions a number of studies which point out that the Seraphic Doctor is closer to the Greek Fathers on the theology of the Trinity than is the Angelic. Bonaventure was influenced proximately by Richard of St. Victor and remotely by Pseudo-Dionysius.

In Bonaventure's theology, God is seen primarily as fruitful being or as supreme goodness. Within that context, it becomes understandable that the inner-divine

<sup>110</sup> Hayes, S88. Cf. Hayes, trans. *What Matter of Man? Sermons on Christ by St. Bonaventure*, (Chicago, 1974), p. 79.

<sup>111</sup> I. Delio, "Bonaventure's Metaphysics of the Good," *Theological Studies*, 60 (June, 1999): p. 241.

<sup>112</sup> McCool, p. 384.



emanations should be seen as the full expression of that fruitfulness and goodness.<sup>113</sup>

For the first principle, by the fact of being first, is the *most perfect* in producing, *most springlike* in emanating, *most fertile* in sprouting up. Since, therefore perfect production, emanation and sprouting are found only in two intrinsic modes, viz. in the mode of *nature* and the mode of *will*, of the word, namely, and of love; thus it is that it is necessary that there be asserted there, by reason of the supreme *perfection*, *springlikeness* and *fecundity*, a double mode of emanating in respect to the two hypostases produced; and from this it is necessary to assert three persons. And because the *most perfect* production is only with respect to *equals*, the *most springlike* emanation is only in respect to *coeternals*, the *most fertile* sprouting up is only of *consubstantials*: it is necessary to understand that the first principle includes within itself three coequal, coeternal, and consubstantial hypostases.<sup>114</sup>

The second person is, first of all, the Son of the Father. The third person is the mutual love spirated, breathed forth, by the Father and the Son. From a number of viewpoints, the second person appears more and more clearly as the center of the life of the Trinity. This theology of the Holy Trinity is based on the axiom of the pseudo-Areopagite: good is diffusive of itself.<sup>115</sup>

From a metaphysical point of view, the Word is a middle between the first person, totally self-communicative, and the third person, totally communicated. For the second person is both communicated and communicating. From a psychological perspective, the Son is a mean between love which is fully gratuitous and love which is fully owed, for he is love both given and received. From whatever perspective, the Son appears as center of Trinitarian life.<sup>116</sup>

That there are only three divine persons is both a teaching of the Catholic Faith and a persuasion of reason.

The argument of congruity is taken from the sufficiency of combinations...

...Because "love is in all the persons," as Richard says, and there are only three loves, viz. "gratuitous and owed and mixed from both," there will be only three persons: *one* who only gives, in whom there is gratuitous love; *another*, who only

<sup>113</sup> Hayes, S88. Bonaventure, *Q. disp. de myst. trin.*, q. 8, resp. (5: 114).

<sup>114</sup> Bonaventure, *Qaest. Disp. de Trin.*, q. 8, conclus.; (5:114). Primum enim principium, hoc ipso quod primum, est *perfectissimum* in producendo, *fontalissimum* in emanando, *fecundissimum* in pullulando. Quoniam ergo perfecta productio, emanatio et pullulatio attenditur tantum secundum duos modos intrinsecos, scilicet per modum *naturae* et per modum *voluntatis*, verbi scilicet et amoris; hinc est, quod necesse est, ibi poni ratione summae *perfectionis*, *fontalitatis*, et *fecunditatis* duplicem modum emanandi respectu duplicis hypostasis productae, emanantis a prima persona tanquam a primo principio producente; ac per hoc necesse est, ponere personas tres. – Et quia *perfectissima* productio non est nisi respectu *aequalium*, *fontalissima* emanatio non est nisi respectu *coaeternalium*, *fecundissima* pullulatio non est nisi *consubstantialium*: necesse est intelligere, quod primum principium includat intra se tres hypostases coaequales, coaeternales et consubstantiales

<sup>115</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, I, d. 2, a. un., q. 2 (1: 53-54). In Hayes, S89, n. 22. *bonum diffusivum sui*

<sup>116</sup> Hayes, S89. Bon., *In Sent.*, I, d. 2, a. un., q. 4 (1:57).

receives, in whom there is owed love; and a *middle* person, who gives and receives, in whom there is a love mixed from both.<sup>117</sup>

The first terminus of God's self-communicating love is more than is shown by the name "Son." This first terminus is the complete expression of all that the divine love is in itself or could possibly be in relation to finite creatures, of all the Father is in himself and of all he could communicate to his creation. The Father utters the Word as his necessary immanent communication within God. This utterance also expresses the possible free sharing of reality to possible creatures. "Thus, the Word, as the Father's self-expression, is the openness of the Father to the other in all its forms."<sup>118</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor often expresses a preference for the title "Word," which he considers a sign of a complex of relations which the second Person has to the Father, to all creatures, and to revelation. All these relations are based on the fact that the Son of the Father's love, is also the Word of the Father's self-expression as loving source of all that is. To speak of him as "Son" is to speak of him in relation to the Father alone, but to call him "Word," is to add the notion of expression of the Father to all reality.<sup>119</sup> The Father's self-communicative love gives expression to its entire fruitfulness in the generation of the Son, so that in generating the Son, the Father speaks one Word immanent to himself in which he expresses the possibility of creation.<sup>120</sup> Here we see the exemplarism of Point Three.

It must be said that "son" speaks only of a relation to the father, but "word" indicates a relation to the speaker, to that which is expressed by the word, to the voice it assumes, and to the doctrine which, by means of the word, is caused in another; and since the Son of God must here be described not only in relation to the Father, from whom he proceeds, but also to the creatures he made, to the flesh he assumed, and to the proofs he provided, he should, most nobly and most becomingly, be described under the name of word, because that word relates to all these things, nor can any more fitting name be found in all the world.<sup>121</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.* 1, d. 2, a. un. q. 4, conclus.; (1:57) Tres tantum esse personas divinas, et fides catholica docet, et ratio suadet. Ratio congruitatis sumitur ex sufficientia combinationum . . . Quia cum "amor sit in omnibus personis," ut dicit Richardus, et non sit nisi triplex amor, videlicet "gratuitus et debitus et ex utroque permixtus," tantum erunt tres personae: *una*, quae tantum dat, in qua est amor gratuitus; *alia*, quae tantum accipit, in qua est amor debitus; et *media*, quae dat et accipit, in qua est amor permixtus ex utroque.

<sup>118</sup> Hayes, S89f.

<sup>119</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.* 1, d. 27, p. 2, a. unic., q. 3, conclus.; (I: p. 488).

<sup>120</sup> Hayes, S90.

<sup>121</sup> Bonaventure, *Comment. in Joann.*, cap. 1, p. 1, 6, 1; (VI, p. 247). Dicendum quod *filius* solum dicit comparisonem ad patrem, *verbum* vero dicit comparisonem ad dicentem, dicit comparisonem ad id quod per verbum dicitur, dicit comparisonem ad vocem, quam induit, dicit etiam comparisonem ad doctrinam, quae mediante verbo in altero efficitur; et cum Dei Filius debeat hic

The second Person, the Word, the center of the life of the divine Trinity is the basis for the being of all that is not the Father; the most basic relation is that between the Word and the Father. In it is the basis of all other relations. He who is the center of the life of the Trinity is also the exemplary cause of all creation. Creation will be an external word giving expression to the one eternal Word. Since the triune God creates, as one orderly principle, according to the Word, then it follows that all created reality has, in its inner constitution, a relation to the Word, and since the Word expresses the trinitarian structure of God, everything created bears an impression of the Trinity in itself.<sup>122</sup> This is the exemplarism to be proven here in Point Two.

Philosophers seek the exemplary cause. They find it in the one divine essence. But the theologian comes to know the exemplary cause as the Word, the center of the life of the Trinity. In him the whole trinitarian structure of the divine nature expresses itself. The Trinity is the exemplar of all finite reality through the divine Word. God can communicate being to the finite creature only by being supremely communicative in himself.<sup>123</sup>

But a word is nothing other than an express or expressive likeness, conceived by the power of an intelligent spirit, according to which it perceives itself or another. Therefore it is evident that the understanding of a word presupposes the understanding of knowledge and of generation and of an image: the understanding of knowledge in the perception of the intelligent spirit; the understanding of generation in the interior conception; the understanding of the image to be conformed in likeness through all, and it adds above these the understanding of expression.<sup>124</sup>

The Word, expression of the Father, is the seat of the divine Ideas, the highest exemplary cause. All creation imitates him. Material reality is his trace or vestige (footprint). Human souls and angels are images of God, because they

describi non tantum in comparatione ad Patrem, a quo procedit, sed etiam ad creaturas, quas fecit, et ad carnem, quam induit, et ad documenta, quae praeibit: nobilissime et decentissime sub nomine verbi describi debuit, quia nomen illud ad omnia respicit, nec posset in mundo nomen convenientius inveniri.

<sup>122</sup> Hayes, S 90.

<sup>123</sup> Hayes, S91.

<sup>124</sup> Bonaventure. *In Sent.*, 1, d. 27, p. 2, a. unic., q. 3, conclus.; I: p. 488. Verbum autem non est aliud quam similitudo *expressa* et *expressiva*, concepta vi spiritus intelligentis, secundum quod se vel aliud intuetur. Unde patet, quod intellectus *verbi* praesupponit intellectum *notitiae* et *generationis* et *imaginis*; intellectum *notitiae* in intuitu spiritus intelligentis; intellectum *generationis* in conceptione interiori; intellectum *imaginis* in similitudine per omnia conformi, et superaddit his omnibus intellectum *expressionis*.

have God as the object of their intellects and wills.<sup>125</sup> Their similarity to God is the basis for their ability to know and love Him.

Scholastics taught the principle of being and the principle of intelligibility are identical. St. John's prologue tells us all things were made through the Word and God enlightens all humans through the Word, and this same Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. "...Then it follows that Jesus Christ lays claim to man's quest for the word of universal intelligibility."<sup>126</sup> "If it is impossible to understand a creature except through that by which it was made, then in some way the Word is involved in all genuine knowledge at whatever level."<sup>127</sup>

For St. Bonaventure, a thing's intelligibility is principally outside it, in the Word of God; a definitely Platonic view. For St. Thomas, following Aristotle, the thing is intelligible through its own being. This extrinsicism and intrinsicism, respectively, reminds one of the transcendent past and immanent future in E. Schillebeeckx' *God the Future of Man*.

In the older culture, orientated toward the past, whenever we thought or spoke of God's transcendence, we used, almost automatically, to project God into the past. Eternity was rather like an unchangeable and petrified or eternalized "past" – "*in the beginning* was God."

Now, however, in a culture which is resolutely turned toward the future ...the believer ...will associate God with man's future...

In such a cultural framework, the God of those who believe in him will obviously reveal himself as the "One who is to come, ... The God of the promise again gives us the task of setting out toward the promised land, a land that we ourselves ... must reclaim and cultivate ...

The verification principle of the Christian faith ...is to be found in the fact that Christians, as the "community of those who hope," show in practice in their lives that their hope is *capable* of changing the world now and of making our history a real history of salvation which brings well-being to all men ...A faith in God as the One who is to come, as the future of the individual person and of the community of persons, must show its effectiveness in and to this world if it is to avoid being dismissed as incredible ...Faith which ...proclaims God as the One who is to come ...has to make this believed promise come true in history...

Anyone whose entire being is, culturally and religiously, orientated towards the past inevitably runs the risk of leaving the world as it is, of interpreting it, but not changing it – this was Karl Marx's legitimate criticism of the religion of his time. This attitude also runs the risk of by-passing the terrestrial future and taking hold of the post-terrestrial directly. In our new culture, however, Christian faith in a post-terrestrial future can only be seen to be true if this eschatological hope shows itself capable of bringing mankind a better future here and now.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>125</sup> McCool, p. 384.

<sup>126</sup> Hayes, S92.

<sup>127</sup> Hayes, S92.

<sup>128</sup> (London: Sheed & Ward, 1969), pp. 180-183.

Bonaventure's work can be seen as an explanation of reality according to the axiom, "For the same is the principle both of being and of knowing."<sup>129</sup> ... All our efforts to discover the intelligibility of the world around us are in some way related to the Word. And since the Word is incarnate in Jesus, there is a basic relation between the truth of creation and the truth of the Incarnation.<sup>130</sup>

For from all eternity the Father begets a Son similar to Himself and expresses Himself and a likeness similar to Himself, and in so doing He expresses the sum total of His [active] potency; He expresses what He can do, and most of all, what He wills to do, and He expresses everything in Him, that is, in the Son or in that very Center, which so to speak is His Art. Hence this Center is Truth; and it is proved by Augustine and other saints that "Christ having His chair in heaven teaches inwardly"; nor can any truth be known in any way whatsoever except through this Truth. *For the same is the principle both of being and knowing.* If, then, as the Philosopher says, the knowable is eternal as such, it necessarily follows that nothing can be known except through a truth that is immutable, undisturbed, and unconfined.<sup>131</sup>

Thus, things are intelligible, not in and through any intelligibility of their own, but in and through the Word. And this is the exemplarity and illumination taught by St. Bonaventure and summarized in Point Two.

God speaks but one Word in which the world and its history are co-spoken. The human sciences are the noetic explication of that Word as it has been objectified in the created universe.<sup>132</sup>

The Word is the medium of the Trinity, between Father and Holy Spirit. He is the medium between God and creation. All creation imitates the divine ideas in the Word and yearns to return to them and to him. Man is the created medium of creation, who *alone* unites in himself spirit and matter. The Word can unite himself to creation only by a Hypostatic Union with this created medium of creation, with man, the microcosm.<sup>133</sup> After Adam's sin, the Word becomes, not just the medium between God and man, but the mediator between

<sup>129</sup> Bonaventure, *In Hexaem.* 1: 13 (5:331) *Works* 5, 8, transl. J. de Vrink.

<sup>130</sup> Hayes, p. S95.

<sup>131</sup> Bonaventure, *In Hexaem.*, 1:13; (5:331); *Works*, 5:8 transl. J. de Vrink. Pater enim ab aeterno genuit Filium similem sibi et dixit se et similitudinem similem sibi et cum hoc totum *posse* suum; dixit quae possit facere, et maxime quae voluit facere, et omnia in eo expressit, scilicet in Filio seu in isto *medio* tanquam in sua arte. Unde illud medium *veritas* est; et constat secundum Augustinum et alios Sanctos, quod "Christus habens cathedram in coelo docet interius"; nec aliquo modo aliqua veritas sciri potest nisi per illam veritatem. *Nam est principium essendi et cognoscendi.* [Emphasis added: L.Gl.] Si enim scibile in quantum scibile secundum Philosophum aeternum est; necesse est ut nihil sciatur nisi per veritatem immutabilem, inconcussam, incoangustatam.

<sup>132</sup> Hayes, S92.

<sup>133</sup> McCool, p. 385.

the fallen world and God, offended by sin. Therefore, the Word is the Divine Medium between the Persons of the Trinity, and also the medium between God and creation. By his Hypostatic union with human nature, he becomes the created medium, and the mediator for fallen creatures. Medium in the Trinity, medium with creation, mediator with the fallen creature.<sup>134</sup>

The Word proceeds from the Father. With the Father, he is the source of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the Word is medium between the two other Divine Persons, the Divine Medium in the Trinity. Creation is an image or vestige of the Word, home of the exemplary divine ideas the creature imitates, but also an image and vestige of the Father, from whom the Word receives the divine nature, and an image and vestige of the Holy Spirit, to whom Father and Word communicate the divine nature.<sup>135</sup> All three Divine Persons share in the exemplarity mentioned here in Point Two.

The Word is also the medium between God and man. Creation strives to return to the divine ideas and to the Word, which is their center. The Word can unite himself to all creation only through a Hypostatic Union with man. For man alone is the microcosm, uniting in himself matter and spirit. Man is the medium of creation.<sup>136</sup>

After the sin of Adam and Eve, the Word unites himself to the human race not only as the medium between God and creation but as the mediator, reconciling a sinful world to a rejected God. Because of the incarnate Word's redemptive life and death, the Holy Spirit and, indeed, the whole Trinity, comes to dwell in the souls of the redeemed.<sup>137</sup>

Rather than following pseudo-Dionysius and calling God "the goodness diffusive of itself," St. Thomas might be led by his more Aristotelian tendency to prefer the name "*Qui est*." For St. Bonaventure, that would belong more to Moses' experience with the burning bush than to the Christian revelation.<sup>138</sup> "... From the perspective of the New Testament, Goodness is the proper name of the same God known from philosophy and known from the Old Testament as 'He who is.'<sup>139</sup> "Pure reason asks questions about the attributes of God. But the full answers are found only in the New Testament.<sup>140</sup> "In the *Itinerarium* he

<sup>134</sup> McCool, p. 384f.

<sup>135</sup> McCool, p. 384f.

<sup>136</sup> McCool, p. 385.

<sup>137</sup> McCool, p. 385.

<sup>138</sup> Hayes, S 93. Bonaventure., *Itiner.* 5, 2 (5:308).

<sup>139</sup> Hayes, p. S94.

<sup>140</sup> Hayes, p. S94.

states that being is the name of God in the Old Testament whereas good is the name of God in the New Testament..."<sup>141</sup>

For the Seraphic Doctor, therefore, the intrinsic intelligibility of creation cannot be grasped without seeing its relation to the Word of God, medium of the Trinity and of creation. His middle position in the Trinity makes him the highest exemplary cause. As supreme exemplary cause, he is the basis of the divine illumination of the norms of truth and value. Without these, no created thought or love is possible. Without the presence of the Word, the human spirit would not have the power to think or to love nor would it have any object to think of or to love.<sup>142</sup> And this is the exemplarity of Point Two.

This philosophy of the soul as image of the Trinity and the world as its vestige, or footprint, protected St. Bonaventure's theology against the extreme naturalism of the Latin Averroists' self-sufficient Aristotelian world. Man and the world are intelligible, the Franciscan Master holds, only in terms of their intrinsic, essential relation to the Trinity. A rigidly naturalistic Aristotelian philosophy, which excludes any such relation, is simply false.<sup>143</sup> St. Thomas avoids such rigid naturalism; St. Bonaventure is even further from it.

As the devout Christian grows in likeness to God through asceticism and contemplation, God reveals himself progressively to him both in the world and his own sanctified soul and in the contemplative reading of the Bible. His deeper knowledge of created matter and spirit will help him see the three symbolic meanings of Scripture underneath the literal sense.<sup>144</sup> This is the illumination of Point Two.

"Bonaventure's Trinitarian approach to reality makes his symbolic use of scientific theology in *De Reductione Artium ad Theologiam* and the *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* quite understandable," although both works may appear to the uninitiated to be an odd mixture of scientific Scholastic theology and the older free-wheeling symbolic interpretation of Scripture.<sup>145</sup>

### 3. Summary

St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure both hold to illumination and to exemplarism. The Franciscan emphasizes both much more, so that he uses very negative words to describe the attempt to understand or be understood, apart from divine help. This is why he held only one science, theology. God's image,

<sup>141</sup> Delio, p. 231.

<sup>142</sup> McCool, p. 385.

<sup>143</sup> McCool, p. 385.

<sup>144</sup> McCool, p. 385f.

<sup>145</sup> McCool, p. 386.

vestige, or shadow is in the object known; God's illumination is in the subject knowing. That is the beginning and the end of knowing, at least of knowing with any trace of necessity or universality. Kant said necessity or universality was the sign of subjectivity, since they could not be found in objects of experience. St. Bonaventure said they were signs of God's imprint in the object and his illumination in the subject, since he holds, in agreement with Kant, created objects and subjects cannot rise above the particular. You can put your finger into the flame and say, "That hurts," without illumination. But to make a general rule and say, "Generally speaking, it is better not to do that," you need God's active help.

St. Thomas also holds you need God's active help to know, or to do anything else. But his emphasis is weaker than Bonaventure and he does not use the negative terms Bonaventure does. For him, humans have some intelligence and objects have some intelligibility, both, to be sure, from God. But they have them. They are theirs.

In exemplarism, a great difference is found in St. Bonaventure's basing it on the Word, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, in imitation of the Greek Fathers. St. Thomas places the exemplary ideas in the Divine Nature.

The impact of this section on Point One – Bonaventure, unlike Thomas, holds that things are intelligible *only* in Christ and, consequently, theology is the only science – may surprise even the theologically well-informed reader. This section upholds more similarity between Thomas and Bonaventure than is usually maintained. But, for all their similarities [not so surprising for members of the same university and faculty] there is a difference between the two Doctors on illumination and exemplarism: Bonaventure much more the Platonist, Thomas, more the Aristotelian.

### **Point Three: Various Types of Analogy**

The third point of Part One speaks of the uses which St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure make of analogy. Difficulties arise when we use the same words about God and creatures. We may say that God and humans are both good, wise, and active. But God is so far above us that His goodness, etc. are on a completely different level from ours. If we take them as meaning exactly the same thing, we end up by concluding to some erroneous identities between God and creatures, the infinite superiority of God can be forgotten, and we can even end in pantheism. But if we say that words are used of God in a completely different sense, like Rudolf Otto's "Wholly Other," then we can never say anything meaningful about God. We cannot meaningfully say He is good or wise or



powerful because these terms derive their meaning from our earthly experience of goodness, wisdom, and power, from which He is, according to Otto, "Wholly Other." We are left with the only possibility, that words and concepts are applied to God and creatures with a meaning that is partly the same, partly different. This is analogy.

St. Thomas uses the analogy of attribution (or proportion), in which an attribute is said primarily of one thing and in an extended, analogous manner of other things because of their relation to the first. "Healthy" is said, first of all, of a living body which possesses health and secondarily of those things which cause, maintain, restore, or manifest that health. He also used, for a short time, the analogy of proportionality, based on the relation of one pair of things to a second pair. He used proportionality only for a short time because it seemed to him to place something over God, if only an abstract idea. For instance, a top hat and a kid glove both can truly fit. But they fit in different ways. The analogous notion of "fitting" is, in some way over all. This causes some incongruity when applied to God. Some Thomists today, following Cajetan, say the identity of God's essence and existence is analogous to the proportion, the "fittingness" between a creature's essence and existence. But then the notion of "habitude," which includes both identity and proportion, is, in a way, over the whole analogy and its analogates, including God. This St. Thomas would not allow. He did not want anything, even an abstract idea, placed, in any way, over God.

St. Bonaventure used, like St. Thomas, analogies of proportion, proportionality, and attribution. Also, an analogy, not found in Thomas, of shadow, vestige, and image.

### *1. St. Thomas: Attribution and Proportionality*

St. Thomas says analogy is midway between univocity and equivocity: It is impossible that anything be predicated of God and creatures univocally. All the perfections of things which are in created things divided and multiple, preexist in God as one.

For example, when the name *wise* is said of a man, we signify some perfection distinct from the essence of the man and from his power and his *esse*. But when we say the name about God, we do not intend to signify something distinct from his essence or power or *esse*.... When it is said of God,...it leaves the thing signified uncomprehended and exceeding the signification of the name.... Whence, no name is predicated univocally of God and creatures.

But not purely equivocally either. ...because, if this were true, nothing could be known or demonstrated about God from creatures..., and this is contrary both

to philosophers, who prove many things demonstratively about God and to the Apostle, who says, Rm. 1:20, *The invisible things of God are clearly perceived through those things which are made.*

We must say, therefore, that names of this kind are said of God and creatures according to analogy, that is proportion.<sup>146</sup>

The Common Doctor distinguishes, besides metaphor, *attributive* analogy ("one-to-one"), in which the quality is properly in one analogate ("health" in a living body) and attributed to another because of its relation to the first ("healthiness" or "healthfulness" in medicine – a cause – or complexion – a

<sup>146</sup> Aquinas, *Sum Theol.* I, q. 13, a. 5, c. ...Impossibile est aliquid praedicari de Deo et creaturis univoce.... Omnes rerum perfectiones, quae sunt in rebus creatis divisim et multipliciter, in Deo praeeiunt unite. ...Putat cum hoc nomen *sapiens* de homine dicitur, significamus aliquam perfectionem distinctam ab essentia hominis, et a potentia et ab esse ipsius.... Sed cum hoc nomen de Deo dicimus, non intendimus significare aliquid distinctum ab essentia vel potentia vel esse ipsius.... Cum dicitur de Deo ...relinquit rem significatam ut incomprehensam, et excedentem nominis significationem....Unde nullum nomen univoce de Deo et creaturis praedicatur. Sed nec etenim pure aequivoce ...Quia secundum hoc, ex creaturis nihil posset cognosci de Deo, nec demonstrari ...Et hoc est tam contra philosophos, qui multa demonstrative de Deo probant quam etiam contra Apostolum dicentem, Rm. 1:20: *invisibilia Dei per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta conspiciuntur.*

Dicendum est igitur quod huiusmodi nomina dicuntur de Deo et creaturis secundum analogiam, idest proportionem.

John F. Quinn says St. Thomas denies any analogy of proportion between God and creatures: "Since God and a creature do not come together in a genus, nor share in a common form, they cannot have a proper proportion to the same form; so there cannot be a similitude or likeness of proportion between God and a creature. In other words, for Aquinas, the analogy of proportion cannot be employed to compare creatures and the Creator." *The historical constitution of St. Bonaventure's Philosophy*, (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1973), p. 484. Yet, Aquinas here uses "proportion" as a synonym for "analogy." "Proportio" is, of course, the Latin translation of the Greek "analogia." Where analogy is admitted, it would seem difficult to exclude proportion. Quinn's argument seems (rightly) to exclude *univocal* proportion between creatures and the Creator, rather than analogous. In fact, Aquinas says there can be a proportion between the creature and God:

Ad quartum dicendum quod proportio dicitur dupliciter. Uno modo, certa habitudo unius quantitatis ad alteram; secundum quod duplum, triplum, et aequale sunt species proportionis. Alio modo, quaelibet habitudo unius ad alterum proportio dicitur. *Et sic potest esse proportio creaturae ad Deum* [emphasis added, L. Gl.], inquantum se habet ad ipsum et effectus ad causam et ut potentia ad actum. Et secundum hoc, intellectus creatus proportionatus esse potest ad cognoscendum Deum. *Sum. Theol.* I, q. 12, a. 1, ad 4.

As to the fourth, it must be said that "proportion" is said in two ways. In one way, (as) a certain relation of one quantity to another; according as double, triple and equal are kinds of proportion. In another way, any relation of one to another is called proportion. *And thus there can be a proportion of a creature to God* [emphasis added, L. Gl.], insofar as it is related to him as both effect to cause and as potency to act. And according to this, the created intellect can be proportionate to knowing God.

sign) and *proportional* analogy (two-to-two), in which the relation between one pair of things is similar to the relation between another pair. We may say, "I see the reason," because the relation between a reason and the intellect [two] is similar to the relation between a color and the sense of sight [a different two].<sup>147</sup>

Although Thomists, following Cajetan, use the analogy of proportionality, St. Thomas himself used it only for a short time and then rejected it, as William J. Hill, O.P. points out. The following is based on his *Knowing the Unknown God*.<sup>148</sup>

There are two problems in St. Thomas' use of "analogy." One is that he left us no formal treatment of analogy. The other is that, while he owes much to Aristotle on this point, he clearly departs from him. Aristotle first used it of mathematical proportionality (two is to four as three is to six)<sup>149</sup> and then moved it from quantity to quality. Aquinas sees it as expressive of the order of many to a first.

"Arabian thinkers ...give an Arabic semantic turn to this Greek word ["amphibolous"] so that it appears as *analogikos*...St. Thomas' most common rendering of this word is "proportion," but this is because he is referring to the underlying ontic structure in the real order that will allow for the attributive predication; he takes proportion to mean ...the hierarchy of causal dependence of the many to what is, in some order, first..."<sup>150</sup>

The term "proportionality" does not occur in St. Thomas before 1256 or after 1257. His later treatments of analogy refer to the relation of many to a distinct, separate reality, a "third" reality, or to the direct relation of one reality to another. Proportionality might lead to the first kind, which he disliked when applied to God and creatures. "In effect, this would be to posit an idea whose very abstractness would allow it to somehow incorporate the divine and the creaturely."<sup>151</sup> And whose abstractness would place it, in some way, over God. Proportionality "runs the risk of subordinating the Divine Being to an abstract idea..."<sup>152</sup> After 1257, Aquinas repeated that the sole possibility of analogy between God and creatures is of one to another, not of many to one. Cajetan, on the other hand, insisted on the analogy of proportionality. Your derby hat, overcoat, kid glove, and shoe all "fit." But your hat does not fit your head

<sup>147</sup> Cf. G. Klubertanz, "Analogy," and B. Mondin, "Analogy, Theological Use of," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*.

<sup>148</sup> W. Hill, *Knowing the Unknown God* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1971), pp. 124-136.

<sup>149</sup> This is not an *analogy* but exact proportionality. L Gl.

<sup>150</sup> Hill, *Knowing*, p. 125.

<sup>151</sup> Hill, *Knowing*, p. 127.

<sup>152</sup> Hill, *Knowing*, p. 127.

exactly as your glove fits your hand. There is an analogy of fit or fitting. (The hats of Peter and Paul fit their heads in the much the *same* way. A univocal fit.) In this analogy of fitting, the concept of “fit” or “fitting” stands, in some way *over* the several relations, between glove and hand, hat and head, etc. They are *under* it by being instances of it. Many Thomists, following Cajetan, say the identity (a kind of “habitude”) between God’s essence and his existence is analogous to the proportion (a different kind of “habitude”) between a creature’s essence and its existence. This is an analogy of proportionality, like the analogy of “fitting” and here, the concept of “habitude,” embracing both identity and proportional relation, is, in some way over the whole analogy and all its analogates, including even God. This, Thomas will not allow.

St. Thomas won’t have any thing or concept *over* God. Cajetan has to allow this because he holds attribution can only be *extrinsic*. Only proportionality, he says, can be *intrinsic*. And *being* is intrinsic to God and creatures, to substance and accident. Each of them truly *is*, although they have varying degrees of perfection and independence. Being is *intrinsic* to each of them, analogously, and, if intrinsic, then analogous – necessarily, to Cajetan – by an analogy of *proportionality*.

Cajetan has to take one concept, e.g. goodness-as-such, and apply it in one way to creatures and in another way to God. St. Thomas won’t subordinate the Divine Being to an abstract idea.

Aquinas sees a difference between analogy as a logical instrument in the noetic order – the analogy of names – and as a metaphysical structure in the real order – the analogy of being, more frequently designated “participation.” The analogy of names has a primacy. Analogy is the *naming* of things which we know through a relation between them. It is the transfer of a naming-word from one thing to another because the second is known to us by its relation to the first. Analogy arises out of the limitations of an incarnate, embodied intellect. St. Thomas is aware of the distinction between the order of knowing and the order of being. Analogy lies in the first, although there must be a basis in reality for the transfer of words and concepts.

The original reality named may be found in secondary analogates intrinsically, extrinsically, or merely by supposition. All these cases are equally analogous. When the quality named is intrinsic to both things being considered, then we pass from the world of thought to the structure of the real. Relations among our concepts call us to discover the relations among realities.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>153</sup> Hill, *Knowing*, p. 127.

The related reality can be intrinsic only to one and extrinsic to the others. Health is intrinsic to a healthy living body. It is extrinsic to food, medicine, and vital signs like complexion. All these are called "healthful" – although they are not truly "full of health" – because of a relation to healthy bodies. When Aquinas speaks of names common to God and creatures, he speaks of proportion, not proportionality, and often mentions intrinsic attribution.

Analogy then, according to Hill's study of St. Thomas, is primarily found in our knowledge but it must be grounded in reality. Even in intrinsic attribution, there is one prime analogate. Man is closer to God than a vegetable, less near than an angel. The objective basis for analogy is the real similarity between cause and effect. All effects are like their cause and are seen as analogous to it and to each other. All beings imitate God, the Source of all being. Analogous knowledge is based on this participation in being.

The preceding is based on Hill's *Knowing the Unknown God*. To add some examples of attribution, we may consider royalty. It is intrinsically in "le roi," the king. But other things are *called* "royal" because of their connection to him. His house is a royal palace, his commands are royal decrees, his assistants are royal ministers. All extrinsically. This is an analogy of *extrinsic* attribution or proportion. Brightness is intrinsic to the rays of the sun and also to their reflections in a mirror. But the reflecting mirror is much less bright than the terrible furnace of the sun and is dependent on the sun for any brightness it has. Here, as with "being", we have an analogy of intrinsic attribution or proportion.

## 2. St. Bonaventure: Attribution, Proportion, Proportionality, Shadow, Vestige, and Image

Quinn tells us the Franciscan Master holds there is not a univocal but an analogous similarity between creatures and God:

### ATTRIBUTION, PROPOSITION, PROPORTIONALITY

"Granting that a creature is similar to God, Bonaventure denies, nonetheless, that there is a similitude of God in a creature through a participation of one nature. There is ...a similitude according to analogy and relation, a similitude found in a creature from a comparison with the Creator as an effect is compared to its cause. Since the creature and the Creator are similar to one another in an analogical way, their similarity is neither equivocal or univocal. Some things are said to have an equivocal similarity because they are alike only in name. Other things are said to have a univocal similarity because they are alike both in name and in nature. Those things that are said to have an analogical

similarity, however, have a community according to a likeness of proportion, but not according to a unity of nature. Thus, standing between equivocity and univocity, a community of analogy is established by human reason."<sup>154</sup>

Quinn tells us, "Every comparison of a creature to the Creator, in Bonaventure's view, brings them together into a community of analogy or a community of proportion." Quinn tells us the Saint speaks of three types of analogy.

The first is between an imitation and its original, as between the human soul and God, to which it is naturally similar. They are not united in some third thing, common to both; one is similar to the other by its nature. The similitude of the creature in God is called an idea. An artifact has an exemplar or idea in the mind of the artisan. This establishes a proportion between the creature and its Creator.

...There is an agreement through the participation in one nature or through common comparison. The first brings about a community of univocation, the second, a community of analogy or of proportion ...A likeness does not agree with its like in a third thing but in itself.... The soul is an express likeness of God.<sup>155</sup>

Quinn calls this the analogy of proportion. Bonaventure gave it no name, although he does use the word "proportion."<sup>156</sup> Others call it the analogy of intrinsic attribution.<sup>157</sup>

The second kind of analogy is a similar comparison of two to two. This is a comparison of similar proportions, a relation of relations. The relation between two and four is the same as the relation between three and six. This arithmetical proportion is not an analogy because the two relations are *exactly* the same, not partly the same and partly different. It is not an analogous proportionality but a *univocal* proportionality.

An *analogy* of two to two is found between the two relations of man to animal and white to color. Each of these relations is a proportion in the strict sense. Each is founded on a participation in a common nature. Quinn says each of them is univocal. But when the two proportions are brought together, they are not brought together in a community of univocity but in a community of proportionality. The Seraphic Doctor says proportionality can be called proportion in a broad sense.

In another way something can happen to be conformed to another according to a similar relation or comparison, which can be called "proportion," when it is of

<sup>154</sup> Quinn, *Philosophy*, p. 470.

<sup>155</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, I, d. 1, a. 3, q. 1, ad 1; I. 38f. "...Est convenientia per unius naturae participationem vel per comparisonem communem. Prima facit communitatem univocationis, secunda communitatem analogiae sive proportionis.... Similitudo enim non convenit cum consimili in tertio, sed se ipsa. ...Anima est expressa similitudo Dei."

<sup>156</sup> "Proportion" again!

<sup>157</sup> Quinn, *Philosophy*, pp. 474f.

things of the same genus, and "proportionality," when it is of things of different genera or of things having nothing in common .... Broadly speaking, each can be called "proportion;" and this latter asserts nothing in common, because it is by comparison of two to two, and can be – and is – between things at the greatest distance.<sup>158</sup>

Bonaventure refers to this relation of relations as "proportionality," but Quinn correctly says he does *not* call it the "*analogy* of proportionality." Quinn does call it this.<sup>159</sup>

"The remaining community of analogy is established by a *dissimilar* comparison of two to one, as animal and food are compared to health."<sup>160</sup> In this analogy, called by Quinn and others the analogy of attribution, a term is applied to one thing properly and simply, to others because of their relation to the first. A living body, animal (or plant) can have health and be healthy. This is the primary, proper application of the term. Other things are called "healthy," or "healthful," not because they themselves are truly full of health but because of their relation to the first. Foods and climates cause health. Medicine restores it. A healthy complexion is a sign of it. All these are called "healthful" because of their relation to the prime analogate, the health in a healthy body.<sup>161</sup>

Something is said to be healthy in three ways: either as a subject [of health - L. Gl.], as an animal is said to be healthy; or as a cause, as a potion is called healthy; or as a sign, like healthy urine.<sup>162</sup>

A thing does not communicate its name to a given sign, but does communicate it to a natural sign, as is obvious: for urine is called healthy, because it is a sign of health; for it is a sign which is caused naturally.<sup>163</sup>

Thus far, the two great theologians are in substantial agreement, speaking of analogies of one to one, which others label analogies of proportion or attribution, and of two to two (or several to several), which others call the analogy of proportionality.

<sup>158</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.* I, d. 48, a. 1, q. 1, conclus.; I, 852. Contingit conformari aliquid alicui secundum consimilem habitudinem sive comparisonem, quae potest dici proportio, cum est rerum eiusdem generis, et proportionalitas, cum est rerum diversorum generum sive non communicantium .... Large tamen loquendo utraque potest dici proportio; et haec nihil ponit commune, quia est per comparisonem duorum ad duo, et potest esse et est inter summe distantia

<sup>159</sup> Quinn, *Philosophy*, p. 475.

<sup>160</sup> Quinn, *Philosophy*, p. 476.

<sup>161</sup> Quinn, *Philosophy*, p. 476.

<sup>162</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.* I, d. 46, a. unic., q. 5, resp.; I, 831. ...Aliquid dicitur esse sanum tripliciter: aut subiective, ut animal dicitur sanum; aut dispositive, ut potio dicitur sana; aut ostensive, ut urina sana.

<sup>163</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.* I, d. 45, a. 3, q. 1, ad 3; I, 809. ...Res non communicat signo dato nomen, communicat tamen signo naturali, ut patet: nam urina dicitur sana, quia est signum sanitatis; est enim signum quod causatur naturaliter.

## FURTHER BONAVENTURIAN ANALOGIES: SHADOW, VESTIGE, IMAGE

The Seraphic Doctor has a further discussion of analogy: that of shadow, vestige, which means "footprint," and image.

The names *shadow*, *vestige*, and *image*, which are of Augustinian origin, have analogical connotations in the doctrine of Bonaventure. These similitudes of God in creatures are, as it were, different steps of a ladder by which the human mind ascends from creatures to a knowledge of the Creator. When the Creator becomes known in that way to the human mind, it is said to see the Creator through the creature as through a mirror, or in an analogical manner. Hence, the terms *ladder* and *mirror* have analogical and not metaphorical meanings when they are used by Bonaventure to describe our modes of knowing God, whether from natural reason or from Christian faith.<sup>164</sup>

God is known to us from creatures, then, in proportion to the ways in which they resemble Him. Every creature resembles the Creator, first of all, from a distance and in a confused manner. God is His own *being*, whereas every creature has its *being* from nothing, and so the creature is said to be in darkness with respect to God. From this point of view, the creature is called a *shadow* of God. The human mind knows God, from His shadow, to be the cause of the creature, but only in a general or indeterminate way. Every creature resembles the Creator, secondly, from a distance but in a distinct manner. From that point of view, the creature has a clear imprint of God, and thus it is called a *vestige* of God. The human mind knows God, from His vestige, to be the efficient, formal and final cause of the creature, and this knowledge is attained from the likeness of the unity, truth and goodness of the Creator in the creature. Every spiritual creature, moreover, resembles the Creator in a more distinct manner, because, having a spiritual nature, it is closer to God than the corporeal creature. For this reason, a spiritual creature is called an *image* of God. Thus, possessing memory, intelligence and will, a spiritual creature leads the human mind to God not only as to the threefold cause of creatures, but also as to an object of remembrance, knowledge and love.<sup>165</sup>

When we take into account the Augustinian influence on Bonaventure regarding the similitudes of God in creatures, we can then see an extensive influence of Augustine on the Bonaventurian doctrine of analogy. But Bonaventure uses the Augustinian notions of shadow, vestige and image in his own way. He looks upon matter as the reason why every<sup>166</sup> creature is a *shadow* of the Creator. Bonaventure considers every creature to be a *vestige* of the Creator because it bears, so to speak, His *footprint* (*vestigium*). Thus, for Bonaventure, to *investigate* the creature [is - L. Gl.], as it were, to *trace the footprints* of the

<sup>164</sup> Quinn, *Philosophy*, p. 481; cf. Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, I, d. 3, p. 1, a. unic., q. 3, resp.; I, 74f.

<sup>165</sup> Quinn, *Philosophy*, pp. 480f.; cf. Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, I, d. 3, p. 1, a. unic., q. 2, ad 4; I, 72f.

<sup>166</sup> Bonaventure held that *all* creatures, even angels and the human soul are constituted by matter, a different kind of, "spiritual," matter.



Creator, or to walk in the footsteps of God, especially in the corporeal creature. Since the Creator is reflected more perfectly in His *image* than in His vestiges, Bonaventure prefers to use the analogy of the *mirror* when speaking of our knowledge of God from His similitude in a spiritual creature, particularly in a rational soul. When the human mind sees the divine perfections reflected in the rational soul as in a mirror (*speculum*), the mind is then said to speculate (*speculari*) rather than to investigate. Using this analogy more extensively, Bonaventure, referring to the speculation (*speculatio*) of philosophy, likens its threefold science to a triple *mirror* directing the human mind to God, so that, through the contemplation of wisdom, the mind beholds God as the threefold cause but one principle of all things.<sup>167</sup>

### 3. Summary on Analogy in the Two Doctors

In these Augustinian concepts of shadow, vestige, and image, the Seraphic Doctor has a doctrine of analogy which the "Angel of the Schools" does not follow. Still, in their use of the analogies of attribution, proportion, and proportionality, they have much in common. Here, in the matter of analogy, their theology is *somewhat* different.

### Point Four: Platonism and Aristotelianism

The fourth point contrasts St. Bonaventure's Augustinianism with St. Thomas' Aristotelianism.

The Seraphic Doctor is an Augustinian. Etienne Gilson, among many others, testifies to this. He uses Aristotle very sparingly, apparently forced by the statutes and practice of the University of Paris. These limited uses seem exceptions proving his Augustinian rule.

St. Thomas is called a disciple of Aristotle. He at least consistently consults him and adopts many of his ideas, while producing a truly original, personal synthesis. He is much more a master than a disciple. But he is heavily influenced by Aristotle. He painstakingly combed out anti-Christian teachings of the Stagirite, respectfully incorporated valid insights. He has left an excellent example to those who would Christianize Marx and atheistic existentialism.

The Angelic Doctor's synthesis, heavy with Aristotle, has been applauded by many Catholics and by the Holy See. No other theologian or philosopher has been praised by Popes with anything like the warmth applied to St. Thomas.

<sup>167</sup> Quinn, *Philosophy*, p. 482; Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, II, d. 1, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, conclus.; II, 22; *Itiner.*, cap. 3, 1 & 6; V, 303 & 305.

Thomas retains more Augustinianism than some realize. Aristotle said the intellect was a *tabula rasa*, a clean slate. St. Thomas speaks of inborn habits, the habit of principles and synderesis, also of Plato-like exemplary ideas. Still, the many Aristotelian ideas which the Dominican accepted and the Franciscan rejected show there is a great gulf between them, here, too.

### 1. St. Bonaventure: Augustinianism

To shrink all the differences between the two Doctors into a two-word caricature, one could say while Thomas was “progressive,” Bonaventure was “conservative.” Let us consider the past he was conserving.

#### THE PLATONIST PAST

The Fathers of the Church of both East and West took the image of God in the soul as the basis of their theology. Their concepts both of God and of the soul were very Platonist. They received from Philo Judaeus and the Middle and Neo-Platonists the doctrine of three supreme hypostases, first, the One, second, the Divine Mind (“Nous”) or Divine Word (“Logos”), and, third, the Soul. They built their speculative and mystical theology on that doctrine, by identifying these with the Persons of the Trinity and placing their likenesses in the soul. Arius accepted the Neo-Platonist doctrine of the inferiority of the Logos to the One and concluded the divine Son of God was inferior to the Father. Others, holding orthodox Nicene equality, found many acceptable concepts in Platonic writings.

Teachings compatible with orthodox Christian faith included: the Logos, proceeding eternally from the One, was the seat of the exemplary divine Ideas. This is the basis of Bonaventurian intelligibility in Point One and the exemplarity in Point Two, above; both spiritual and material reality imitated these Ideas in the Logos; the supreme Soul, which is the divine Love, proceeds from the Logos, or from the One through the Logos. It is the principle of order in the world, and the source of every creature’s longing to return in love to the Logos and the One; all creation, through its order and its love, imitates the divine Hypostases from which it comes; but only intelligent beings – angels and men – have the intellect and will needed for a face-to-face encounter with the divine, through mystical knowledge and love and to understand that their understanding comes through the Logos. This is the source of illumination in Point Two, above.<sup>168</sup>

Further: the human soul has fallen from the divine unity and simplicity, going out of itself to disperse and lose itself in matter; it must reverse this outward, downward course, if it is to return to itself and to its Source in love.

<sup>168</sup> McCool., 379f.

Intellectual and ascetical discipline can return it to itself and give it back the unity and power of intellect and will necessary to rise above itself and attain, first, the exemplary ideas of the Mind-Logos, which are the basis and rule of its discursive reasoning and, finally, reach the unity of the One, through a mystical identity transcending the subject-object division of discursive thought. All these were found acceptable by the Church Fathers of East and West and provide the basis of Bonaventure's thought on illumination and exemplarism, discussed in Point Two.<sup>169</sup>

As the soul grows more like God, it grows in knowledge and in understanding of the intelligible forms which shape the material world. The likeness of the sensible world to God is revealed to the soul. Nature becomes a mirror of the Trinity, along with the God-like spiritual reality of the soul itself. These two mirrors of God, world and soul, are stages in the soul's mystical ascent to God. The Logos, the Divine Word, reveals Himself through the outer word of the material world and the inner word of the soul's own spiritual reality. These words, soul and world, are completed by the word of Holy Scripture and they, in turn, shed light on it. The divine Word's teaching lies under the symbolic accounts of Holy Writ just as His intelligible forms underlie the symbolic appearances of sensible things.<sup>170</sup>

Bougerol says:

The *Summa Theologica* [of Aquinas] represents the consummate mastery of theological data; it is the most coherent work available to the Christian as a means of understanding his Faith. In contrast, Bonaventure never considers the goal as being attained: he expresses faith in its upward surge, and sees the understanding as a constant quest. Here we recognize the "ascension" of Plato which Augustine explained in terms of the constant striving of the Christian soul.<sup>171</sup>

And also:

Very early, the School of the Minors took a definite position in the face of the Aristotelian invasion... It chose to judge Aristotle in the light of Augustine.<sup>172</sup>

#### FATHERS OF THE CHURCH AND LEARNING

The Fathers read Scripture to gain a mystical union with God through charity. The structuring element of this contemplative reading was the concept of the soul as the likeness of the Trinity. Clement of Alexandria and Origen had taught this to the East. St. Augustine brought it to the West in his *De Trinitate*

<sup>169</sup> McCool, p. 380.

<sup>170</sup> McCool, p. 380.

<sup>171</sup> Bougerol, p. VIII.

<sup>172</sup> Bougerol, p. 17.

and *De Doctrina Christiana*. The truly pure soul understands both words and things as signs of God, under the illumination of the Logos, who dwells in the soul as an interior teacher or Illuminator (Cf. Point Two). And the basis of all possibility of understanding is the real, ontological similarity between the human soul and the Triune God<sup>173</sup>. When the soul becomes purer, more God-like, it understands more, through the Divine Logos.

The meanings of life and of the world are given us in Holy Scripture, but hidden under signs, types, and figures. The Old Testament was a type of the New. And the literal, historical sense of the narratives of both Testaments is a sign of the three spiritual senses hidden beneath it.<sup>174</sup> All four senses of Scripture, the literal and three spiritual, required a classical education, the seven liberal arts called by the Middle Ages the trivium and quadrivium. Christians believed they needed this education in literature, science, and philosophy to understand the literal and symbolic meaning of the Bible. These subjects prepared them for *lectio divina*, for contemplative union with God.<sup>175</sup>

In this tradition, which lasted until the end of the twelfth century, the education through which *the meaning of the world and human life was discovered and communicated was the spiritual exegesis of scripture. Exegesis was higher education*. [Emphasis added: L. Gl.] *Lectio divina* was the unifying factor in reflective experience. Secular learning was needed only insofar as it was required to understand the literal and symbolic meaning of the sacred page. Although in practice the early medievals were far from being philistines, in theory their justification for their literary education was its value as a preparation for the religious reading of the bible and the effective communication of its message of salvation. *At the heart of their educational theory of exegesis as the unifier of experience was the metaphysics of the Word of God*. [Emphasis added: L. Gl.] The Word, who proceeded from the Father, was the home of the divine ideas. The divine ideas both gave the world its order and enlightened the human mind by serving as its eternal norms of truth and value. [This is the essence of Point Two. L. Gl.] From the Father and the Son came their Gift, the Holy Spirit, the divine source of the love which enabled the converted soul to see the revelation of the Word in the exterior and interior significance of His sacred history and His material creation.<sup>176</sup>

This was an important legacy from the Greek Fathers to St. Bonaventure, their theology of the Trinity, with the Word as medium between the Father

<sup>173</sup> McCool, p. 380f.

<sup>174</sup> Theological (allegorical), moral (tropological), eschatological (anagogic).

<sup>175</sup> McCool, p. 381.

<sup>176</sup> McCool, p. 381.

and the Holy Spirit and also between the Father and creation. This will be more fully treated under St. Bonaventure's theology of the Holy Trinity and exemplarism.<sup>177</sup>

#### THE IMPACT OF ARISTOTLE

Before the works of Aristotle returned to Europe in the late twelfth century,<sup>178</sup> knowledge of the natural world was limited. The world was explained, in neo-Platonic fashion, as a shadow of the divine Ideas, to be understood in relation to these Ideas. St. Bonaventure did not invent "intelligibility-through-the-divine-Ideas." He learned it from Augustinians. St. Augustine learned it from Plotinus, who found it in Plato.

Now Europe heard Aristotle speaking of forces and causes in the material world itself. These influences explained the events in the world. Divine Ideas were pushed back a pace and seemed less important. By some, they were even ignored, especially by Aristotelian extremists, called Latin Averroists.

Aristotle did not carry the best credentials in the popular mind. Pure Aristotelianism was brought to Europe by St. Albert the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas.<sup>179</sup> Before that, he was taught to Europe by Moslem philosophers. Moslems were Public Enemy Number One, sacking, burning, kidnapping, killing all along the Mediterranean coast. The Arabs had even interwoven their own commentaries into the text of Aristotle. Both the Stagirite and his Islamic commentators taught things in direct contradiction to Catholic doctrine. Such contradictions were solved at the stake.

Inevitably, there was a hostile reaction against Aristotle, in some ways exaggerated. St. Bonaventure was in the middle of it. This explains much of his anti-modern point of view. Europe, many felt, had a perfectly good theology before this Aristotle arrived, a pagan brought by Muslims, and full of heresies. What should be the reaction of a faithful Catholic? Compromise? Heaven forbid!

<sup>177</sup> McCool, p. 384.

<sup>178</sup> His logical works were known before this.

<sup>179</sup> "Members of the arts faculty at Paris . . . favored the Commentator's interpretations, whereas champions of theology, chiefly Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas, advanced their own resolutions of the problems. The challenge forced them to acquire more accurate translations of Aristotle, which were provided by their confrère, William of Moerbeke." *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Aristotelianism," I, 804d. "To him [Albert the Great] more than to any other man, credit is due for having explained and presented Aristotelian thought 'to the Latins.'" J. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino: his life, thought, and work* (Garden city, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1974, p. 39. Cf. *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, "Aristotelianism," I, p. 149c.

Of course, some compromise crept in. For Bonaventure, as little as possible. Though Paris was Aristotelian, he never said, "Paris vaut bien Aristote!" Obedience, not ambition had placed him there. Fidelity, not fashion, was his guide. Today, we may wish he had been more receptive to the truth contained in Aristotle. But his teacher was the Augustinian Alexander of Hales, not St. Thomas' guide, the Peripatetic St. Albert the Great.

The Quaracchi editors of St. Bonaventure's *Opera Omnia* said he was in the process of writing his *Commentary on the Sentences* before Aristotelianism appeared in Paris. E. Gilson did not agree. He said his Augustinianism was a choice, a reaction against Sts. Albert and Thomas, and a rejection of a philosophy independent of revelation. "Inspired by Francis, he organized and oriented his philosophical and theological thought toward mysticism."<sup>180</sup> The Seraphic Doctor was a conscious, deliberate Augustinian Neoplatonist.

St. Bonaventure was not alone in his aversion to Aristotle. Weisheipl says:

...Not all of his colleagues at Paris sympathized or approved of Thomas's apostolate or of his attempt to utilize Aristotle in theology. Strong opposition came from thirteenth-century Augustinists, not all of whom were Franciscans. This thirteenth-century wing of theologians not only feared an Aristotelianism that could lead to Averroism and its heretical consequences, but they also rejected the use of the pagan to dilute the pure stream of theology.<sup>181</sup>

Even Dominican disciples of the great Aristotelian, St. Albert the Great drew back from the Stagirite. "It would seem that Albert's German disciples, Hugh of Strassburg, Ulrich of Strassburg, John of Freiburg, John of Lichtenberg, and Giles of Lessines were more impressed with Albert's Platonism than with his solid Aristotelianism."<sup>182</sup>

#### INFLUENCE OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Of all the Fathers, St. Augustine meant the most to Bonaventure. As he himself wrote, St. Augustine was "the master whose authority is definitive and whose words could never be contested." His attachment was obvious if only

<sup>180</sup> "Bonaventure did not trust reason alone. He held that only revelation can save reason from false paths. Moreover, Bonaventure saw philosophy as a mere passage, a stage in the long journey, the first moment of the pilgrimage to God. . . . He subordinated knowledge to charity, to rapture." [Cf. point two] S. Wroblewski, *Bonaventurian theology of prayer* (Pulaski, Wis.: Franciscan Publishers, 1967) 37. Wroblewski cites a contemporary Russian, Lev Shestov, who believes reason and its by-product, scientific method, are too narrow to attain ultimate truth and, like St. Bonaventure, recommends biblical faith for human completion. 37f.

<sup>181</sup> J. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino: his life, thought, and work* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1974), p.285.

<sup>182</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 43.

from the fact that he quoted St. Augustine over three thousand times. It was from Augustine that Bonaventure received his orientation to search for wisdom and to develop a theology as a spiritual teaching. In turn, Bonaventure so influenced the intellectual life of the friars that the Franciscan school of theology is still known as "Franciscan Augustinianism."<sup>183</sup>

Some Aristotelian language does appear in the Seraphic Doctor's writings. Tavard attributes that to contemporary rhetoric:

Bonaventure must have been greatly impressed by Aristotle's theory of the four causes as it was used in the rhetoric of his time. He introduced the *Commentary on the Sentences* with a lengthy prologue on the fourfold causality of the Book of Sentences. He also introduced each of his four biblical commentaries with an investigation of their four causes. Two causes – efficient and final – are extrinsic. Two – formal and material – are intrinsic to the book.<sup>184</sup>

A few second-hand quotations do not a disciple make. Even full acceptance of one doctrine, such as the four causes, does not. The Franciscan Master remained a dedicated Augustinian.

## 2. Aristotle: Medieval Beginnings

### ABELARD

The traditional unification of experience through exegesis founded on the indwelling Word collapsed in the thirteenth century, under the assault, at first of Aristotelian logic, then of Aristotelian epistemology and metaphysics. This had begun in the preceding century with St. Anselm and Abelard. Anselm used the "necessary reasons" of Aristotelian logic to explain the revealed mysteries of the Incarnation, the Trinity, freedom, and grace. Abelard infuriated St. Bernard by applying dialectic to Scripture. Robert S. Smith says of Abelard:

"The novelty of his teaching consisted in the forthright raising of questions suggested by his dialectical studies; this was not the traditional method of communicating the patristic tradition with its heavy emphasis on questions that had affective implications."<sup>185</sup>

Despite the wrath of the Mellifluous Doctor, Abelard's dialectical theology began an inexorable trend and scientific theology arose in the following century

<sup>183</sup> Wroblewski, 39; cf. C. Majchrzak, *A brief history of Bonaventurianism* (Pulaski, Wis.: Franciscan Publishers, 1957).

<sup>184</sup> *Forthbringer*, pp. 58f.

<sup>185</sup> *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Abelard."

to fill the void left by the collapse of the unification of experience in the traditional way, by exegesis guided by the indwelling Word of God.<sup>186</sup>

The Fathers disagreed on some things. Abelard listed their differing opinions and then used definitions and distinctions learned from Aristotle to settle these differences in his *Sic et Non*. This led to the adoption of the *quaestio* as the authorized method of finding the true explanation of disputed passages in Scripture.

#### PETER LOMBARD

In the twelfth century, Peter Lombard's *Book of Sentences* also collected differing Patristic opinions and grouped them under topic headings in four books of *quaestiones*.<sup>187</sup> Lombard's books were not arranged in historical order, like the Scriptures, but in logical order, like an abstract philosophy: God, creatures, Incarnation, Redemption, sacraments.<sup>188</sup>

Peter Lombard presented in his *Sentences* a collection of authoritative interpretations of scripture from Fathers, councils and others. Thirteenth century theology took a new form based on courses on the *Sentences*. For two centuries afterwards theologians, including Aquinas and Bonaventure, wrote expositions on this basic book.<sup>189</sup> It was the standard source for theological thought. Its similarities and comparisons were the foundation of the scholastic method by which all scholars explored that subject and resolved its problems.

The range of Peter's subject matter is all-inclusive: four books on God, created things, including man and his virtues, human sins, and the ends of man and the world. The problems arise from the distinctions which form the chapters of the books and which set the statements of accepted authorities in opposition and contradiction on fundamental problems.... The twofold method of opposition and proof became the method of teaching and was therefore called the scholastic method.<sup>190</sup>

Alexander of Hales, Paris' first Franciscan Master of Theology and the teacher of St. Bonaventure, took another revolutionary step in the early thirteenth century, making Lombard's *Sentences* the basic textbook for his lectures. Explanation of Scripture took second place in higher education, yielding to a philosophically ordered textbook made up of *quaestiones*. And soon Lombard's *Book of Sentences* gave way to the *quaestiones disputatae*, in which the Master

<sup>186</sup> McCool, p. 381f.

<sup>187</sup> McCool, p. 382.

<sup>188</sup> McCool, p. 382.

<sup>189</sup> McKeon, pp. S28f.

<sup>190</sup> McKeon, pp. S29f.



of Theology gave his position on disputed topics, using Aristotle's logic as his method and relying on Aristotelian epistemology and metaphysics.<sup>191</sup>

#### THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

The interpretation of God's word had undergone a revolutionary alteration. The cause of this was the rediscovery of Aristotle, first through the Muslims and then through Latin translations of the original. The West was fascinated by the rigor of the Stagirite's logic and the explanatory power of his metaphysics and philosophy of nature. The masters of the university were confronted by a world which had its own intrinsic intelligibility. Through this logically coherent, metaphysical explanation of natural processes and even human conduct, the natural world had a meaning of its own.

Creation was no longer the semi-real shadow of a Platonic Mind. The Paris Faculty of Arts turned from its traditional literary exposition of the liberal arts to a philosophical expounding of the Aristotelian corpus. Aristotle's logic and metaphysics were now seen as necessary and sufficient to understand the world and man. For the Masters of Arts at Paris, or at least for the extreme Aristotelians, the Latin Averroists, among them, there was no need of a symbolic relation of man and nature to the divine Ideas in the Word of God. Aristotle gave an explanation of all nature, including the human, which was completely self-sufficient. In particular, history was discarded.

The Masters of Theology had a more difficult time. Aristotelian science drew universal conclusions from universal and necessary first principles. It had no place for the singular and contingent event. Nature had been a symbol of the Word of God, explained by God's written scriptural word. The Bible tells a story of contingent events. Aristotle's doctrine had no place for historical facts and, alas, the Bible is history. How could Aristotle be connected to that? Thomas and Bonaventure each had his own answer to that.<sup>192</sup>

#### *3. The Influence of Aristotle on Thomas and Bonaventure*

The Masters of Theology were faced with Aristotelian objections. Gradually, they were forced to present their theology as another form of Aristotelian science, often to defend the faith against objections from the disciples of the Stagirite. Aristotle had already been a help, even a great help to them. They used his logic as their method of inquiry. They drew on his epistemology and metaphysics, sometimes to great effect. Aristotle helped them distinguish be-

<sup>191</sup> McCool, p. 382.

<sup>192</sup> McCool, p.382f.

tween nature and supernature and this helped them state the relation between divine revelation and philosophical knowledge. They were indebted to him also for the distinction between actual and habitual grace.

Yet, as stated above, a singular, contingent event was unintelligible to Aristotle's universal, necessary science. How could there be an Aristotelian explanation of the singular events of scriptural revelation? How could universal and necessary knowledge unite a prayerful reading of Scripture with a contemplative ascent to its Author? The old symbolic exegesis had combined these very well. But if God's truth is revealed in the historical narrative of Scripture, how could there be an Aristotelian science of revealed truth?<sup>193</sup>

St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure each constructed his scientific theology in his own way. Each was a Master of Theology, committed to responding to *quaestiones disputatae* according to Aristotelian logic.<sup>194</sup> As Bachelors of the Sentences, they had lectured on the philosophically ordered textbooks of Peter Lombard. Each believed, in his own way, in the Aristotelian theory of abstraction and the consequent distinction of the sciences and also accepted the absorption, by philosophy, of literature, in the Arts Faculty.<sup>195</sup>

St. Thomas, accepting Aristotle with a whole heart, made good theoretical distinctions. Bonaventure, cautious with Aristotle, retained good practical combinations.

The differences between the two Doctors became clearer in their reaction to the current called "Latin Averroism." St. Thomas coined the name "Averroism" because these radical Aristotelians accepted the theory of Ibn Rushd (in Latin, "Averroes") on the obscure teaching of the Stagirite on the nature of the human mind. They held there was only one human soul, one human intelligence, which is the lowest of the heavenly intelligences and which moves the moon. Humans are multiplied through matter and their acts of intelligence are many because the one (celestial) human intelligence is united with the many phantasms in many men. "A conception of this sort destroys personal immortality. Only the human race, concentrated in this unique intelligence, is immortal and eternal as the universe."<sup>196</sup>

Siger of Brabant, leader of the Averroists, propounded the one-mind doctrine and also denied freedom of the will. The will is subject to the causality of the heavenly bodies. Its apparent freedom comes from the interference of many laws and is mere chance. After 30,000 years, the stars will all be in the same places they are now and all the events of the universe will repeat themselves.

<sup>193</sup> McCool, p. 383.

<sup>194</sup> McCool, p. 383.

<sup>195</sup> McCool, p. 383f.

<sup>196</sup> Thonnard, no. 248, p. 365.

Under the influence of St. Thomas, Siger modified his views profoundly. He came to accept that each human has his own immortal soul. And he explained human liberty as Thomas did, "through the lack of proportion between the particular good freely chosen and the absolute good which is the formal object of the will."<sup>197</sup> Wroblewski gives a somewhat anti-St. Thomas view of the debate:

St. Thomas wanted to do battle with Averroism on the ground of pure philosophy. The Augustinians chose to remain on the field of Christian wisdom and block the advance of Averroism by denying a philosophy independent of Revelation. The decisive figure among the Augustinians was St. Bonaventure. To him it was not a question of Averroes or Aristotle. He contended that every philosopher was liable to error. Philosophy needed the guidance of Revelation. Theology exercised jurisdiction over philosophy. It was the existence of philosophy as a separate science that was the main issue. It was contrary to the principle of *reduction*.<sup>198</sup>

Wroblewski even says that, since St. Thomas shared the philosophic principles of Aristotle with the Averroists, he "was hard put to show the difference of his own position," though he "did not side with them entirely."<sup>199</sup> Most writers give St. Thomas credit for solving the Averroist problem for the Church and later ages. Wroblewski's attitude is interesting, precisely because it is rare. Of course, St. Bonaventure did take a very different approach from his Dominican colleague and one can say a kind word for that different approach.

#### ST. THOMAS AND ST. BONAVENTURE ON THE TRINITY

A notable disagreement is that between the two Doctors' views on the Most Holy Trinity. St. Bonaventure's Trinitarian basis for scientific theology was incompatible with St. Thomas' approach, based on his appropriation of the metaphysics and epistemology of Aristotle. To the Angelic Doctor, the Franciscan seemed to be failing to distinguish the natural and supernatural orders and their two kinds of knowledge, faith (the basis for theology) and reason (the basis for philosophy). Reason's study of the contingent world leads to the knowledge of the single divine nature, not to any knowledge of the Holy Trinity. This can be known only through faith. The two orders, natural and supernatural, known respectively through reason and faith, must, for St. Thomas and for most of us who come after him, be always distinguished.<sup>200</sup>

As St. Thomas continued his study of Aristotle's psychology, he was more and more attracted to St. Augustine's psychological analogy of the Trinity and

<sup>197</sup> Thonnard, n. 249, p. 369.

<sup>198</sup> Wroblewski, 111f.

<sup>199</sup> Wroblewski, 111f.

<sup>200</sup> McCool, p. 387f.

of the relations between the Divine Persons. [Strangely enough, the Augustinian, the older, traditional, view of the Trinity differs from that of St. Augustine. And St. Thomas, following St. Augustine, departs from Augustinianism. St. Augustine and Augustinianism are, here, not identical but opposed!]

Perhaps what is startling about his [Bonaventure's] theology of the Trinity is that it does not follow the Western Augustinian model adopted by so many other medieval writers, even though Bonaventure was deeply influenced by many of Augustine's ideas, for example, on epistemology, exemplary, and the human image. However, with regard to the Trinity, Bonaventure opted for the Greek Cappadocian model. While no one has ever explained why Bonaventure favored the Greek model, I would suggest that he saw this model operative in salvation history and the one most compatible with the life and experience of Francis of Assisi.<sup>201</sup> The mystery of the Trinity for Bonaventure is the mystery of personal love. God is love, a love that is personal and can only be expressed in relationship with another person. In the created world, the Trinity of love is expressed in the person of Jesus Christ and in the fullest way, in Jesus Christ Crucified.<sup>202</sup>

St. Thomas moved from the Greek explanation of the Holy Trinity of the *De Potentia* to the [new] Augustinian theology found in the *Summa Theologiae*. Following Aristotle's doctrine of human potencies, he worked out an analogy between the intellectual procession of the Word and the generation of a word in human knowledge, and between the procession of the Spirit and the (spiritual) act of human love.<sup>203</sup>

In the theology of the Trinity according to the Greeks, the Father is seen as constituted in his Person *before* the other Persons' processions. The Father is the origin without an origin, the source without a source. He communicates the divine nature to the Son and Spirit. This is in accordance with the principle, "Good is diffusive of itself," of Pseudo-Dionysius.<sup>204</sup>

St. Augustine's view of the Trinity is incompatible with this. The great African sees the Persons as coming from the opposed relations and these are considered as subsequent to the processions. The Father is not considered prior to the Son in his possession of the divine nature. The intellectual procession of the generation of the Son is thought of as prior to the constitution of the Father. Therefore the Father does not possess the divine nature prior to the Son. The Persons subsist simultaneously in the divine nature.

The Father is not the active source of the generation of the Son. The originating source of the processions is no longer the Father but the unitary divine nature. This has profound consequences. With St. Bonaventure, the self-diffu-

<sup>201</sup> Delio, "Metaphysics," p. 231.

<sup>202</sup> Delio, "Metaphysics," pp. 240f.

<sup>203</sup> McCool, p. 388.

<sup>204</sup> McCool, p. 388.

sion of the good was the dynamism of the processions of the Trinity and then of creation, continuing, by free choice, the inner processions of the Divine Persons. The Franciscan saw an intrinsic connection between the place of the Son in the Trinity and his role in creation and redemption. All this was sacrificed by St. Thomas when he gave up the Greek dynamic explanation of the Trinity. There is no longer a continuous process from the Father to the Son and Spirit and then extended on to creation.<sup>205</sup> On the Trinity, St. Thomas is more Augustinian, closer to St. Augustine, than St. Bonaventure!

#### EXCURSUS: DID ST. THOMAS LEAD TO SECULARISM?

G. McCool is unenthusiastic about St. Thomas' development of Trinitarian theology.

It would appear then that Thomas' cognitional theory which is the basis of his metaphysics forced him to a position in which he had to admit that a scientific theology, structured by a cognitively grounded metaphysics, cannot accept the validity of Bonaventure's Trinitarian synthesis since the metaphysical bond which held it together has been destroyed. There is no continuous procession from the Father through the Son and the Holy Spirit to creation. Metaphysical reflection on the processions takes one no further than the unitary divine nature as their source.... Just as the rigid metaphysical approach of Thomas' scientific theology made it insufficiently sensitive to the historic and symbolic character of Scripture, its overemphasis on the divine nature opened a gap between man's experience of his spiritual life and of his world and the specifically Christian mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation and grace. This gap has widened to a disastrous extent with the increasing secularism of modern culture. Superior though it may be to the scientific theology of Bonaventure in its philosophical armature, we can ask with Rahner whether, as a scientific theology, it provides as adequate a defense against the self-sufficient world of Aristotelian naturalism.

The famous debate between Bonaventure and Thomas over the metaphysics underlying their theology of the Trinity as a unifier of experience was generally considered a matter of purely historical interest up to our generation. Today, however, the scientific theologies of Bonaventure and Thomas, and their connection with Trinitarian theology, furnish two of the most vital options for contemporary systematic theologians in their effort to devise a new scientific theology which can serve as a unifier of present day Christian experience as Aristotelian scientific theology was able to do in the thirteenth century.<sup>206</sup>

It is true that, before St. Thomas, theology was more "religious," and philosophy was not independent of theology and religion. And it is true that, after St. Thomas, from Descartes on, philosophy became secular, and, with e.g.

<sup>205</sup> McCool, p. 389.

<sup>206</sup> McCool, pp. 389f.

Marx and many existentialists, even atheistic. St. Thomas has a place in this progression from theocratic to atheistic or militantly secular. Does this mean he deserves blame for the secularizing of philosophy? This seems a very subjective value judgment. Where in this spectrum does the critic himself stand? If you take a stand with Bonaventure and Christ-centered learning, then St. Thomas can seem like the first step down a slippery, disastrous slope. But you can take a stand with more secular scholars, with Locke, with Kant, and, from that point of view, St. Thomas seems a stubborn religious conservative, blocking the way to freer inquiry. To this writer, St. Thomas seems just about right, St. Bonaventure, too religious, and the atheists of the twentieth century, on the edge of madness. In my opinion, this tells you more about the prejudices – psychoses? – of this writer than about absolute truth. And, just to make sure I offend everyone equally, your judgment on this opinion of mine discloses more, I believe, about you than about Thomas, Bonaventure, or me.

The previous paragraph is highly relativistic, suggesting there is no absolute truth in the matter and all depends on the opinions of the observer. To alleviate this relativism, I appeal to the Magisterium of the Church, especially the ordinary Magisterium, the day-to-day teaching work of the Church, rather than the *extraordinary* Magisterium, the teaching of Ecumenical Councils and those teachings of the Pope which are explicitly labeled “infallible.” Many statements of Popes have endorsed St. Thomas with a warmth they give to no one else. Other theologians are approved but with much greater reservation and more moderate enthusiasm. And – though this would be laborious to document – the Holy See’s practice seems to follow St. Thomas’ middle-of-the-road religiosity.

The Magisterium of the Church is, to me, the one greatest beacon of certainty in a stormy sea of conflicting philosophies and theologies.<sup>207</sup>

I fear I have not solved the problem McCool alleges when he says St. Thomas’ theology is “rigid” in its metaphysics and “insufficiently sensitive” and suggests that he opened a gap between human experience and divine revelation which widened into modern secularism. But I hope I have not shirked it entirely. Whatever the virtues or vices of either of the two great medieval Doctors, all this dissertation claims is that they are different.

<sup>207</sup> Postconciliar popular psychology will label me “security dependent.” But the stability of the Magisterium is impressive, even if my attachment to it is neurotic.

#### 4. Summary

St. Bonaventure has a well-earned reputation as an Augustinian. If we follow Gilson, we can call him a conscious, deliberate Augustinian. His few uses of Aristotle seem to be exceptions, confirming the rule.

St. Thomas was, if not a disciple of Aristotle, a respectful, consistent consultant. I have heard that he "merely baptized" Aristotle. Pouring water on a book does not benefit learning. This "mere baptism" was a painstaking combing out of anti-Christian opinions and a respectful incorporation of valid insights. Consider the efforts of liberation theologians to "baptize" Marx and see how difficult and dangerous it is! Thomas did incorporate vast amounts of Aristotelian thought and produced a synthesis applauded by Catholics and even Popes. No other theologian or philosopher is praised by the Holy See with anything like the warmth applied to St. Thomas.<sup>208</sup> Occasionally, one hears someone say he is not really a good guide for Catholics. I am content to award these critics high marks for originality and await their more detailed proofs.

St. Thomas retained more Augustinianism than some realize. Aristotle said the intellect was a *tabula rasa*, like a board covered with wax and scraped clean of any earlier writing. This, of course, in opposition to Plato's innatism and theory of reminiscence. Thomas held we are born with the habit of principles in the theoretical intellect, the tendency to make good theoretical judgments, and *synderesis* in the practical intellect, the tendency to make valid moral judgments. Is the *tabula* perfectly *rasa*? Add to these his belief, shared with most Christians, in exemplary ideas, and St. Thomas does not seem entirely purified of Platonism.

However, in view of the many Aristotelian beliefs the Common Doctor held - and the Seraphic Doctor rejected! - and the good Dominican's energetic Ar-

<sup>208</sup> To this constant Papal approval, I wish to add a lone Franciscan "Amen." Having passed my seventy-second year and approaching my dissolution and particular judgment, I am, personally, more attracted by Bonaventurian Platonism. But the Catholic Church has the need to deal with *this* world, apparently for much longer than I. She must guide her children through the tangles of this sphere, through wars, just and unjust, through economic and political mysteries. She has, as I have not, a broad and, probably long, worldly vocation and the worldlier wisdom of Aristotle and St. Thomas is a boon for which all Catholics ought to thank God. May I not be refused Franciscan burial for this moment of sincerity! Endorsement of St. Thomas' "worldliness" is found in Josef Pieper, *A Guide to Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame IN: U. of Notre Dame Press, 1962.) Against the traditional theology and the attitudes of the Christian world which it largely determined, "... Thomas tried to win recognition for his 'worldliness' which, as we have said, had been inspired by his acquaintance with Aristotle and which referred back to Aristotle." Page 128. "... Thomas' resolute worldliness set him apart from the spiritualistic, symbolic unworldliness of the age's traditional theology." Page 131.

istotelian reinterpretation of key doctrines of the great Bishop of Hippo (e.g. on seminal reasons: a striking example of reverential exposition<sup>209</sup>) I believe we may conclude to a great gulf between the Aristotelianism of St. Thomas and the Augustinian Neo-Platonism of Bonaventure.

### Point Five: Different Concepts of Theology as a Science

St. Bonaventure conceives of a science in relation to the subject knowing, to the mind which possesses it. Knowledge, action, and passion are inseparable. Emotion is the moving force of all knowledge. Therefore, to him, theology is an affective science. Our minds are naturally connected to God, who is present, in some way, in all knowledge. His presence can be made explicit through the ontological argument, by reflecting on the idea of God ever-present in our minds.

<sup>209</sup> On reverential exposition, *Contra errores Graecorum*, XL, A 71, 39-44. On seminal reasons: "Manifestum est autem quod principium activum et passivum generationis rerum viventium sunt semina ex quibus viventia generantur. Et ideo *convenienter* [emphasis added, L. Gl.] Augustinus omnes virtutes activas et passivas quae sunt principia generationum et motuum naturalium, seminales rationes vocat.

Huiusmodi autem virtutes activae et passivae in multiplici ordine considerari possunt. Nam primo quidem, ut Augustinus dicit VI *Super Gen. Ad litt.*, sunt principaliter et originaliter in ipso Verbo Dei, secundum rationes ideales. Secundo vero, sunt in elementis mundi, ubi simul a principio productae sunt, sicut in universalibus causis. Tertio vero modo, sunt in iis quae ex universalibus causis secundum successiones temporum producantur, sicut in hac planta et in hoc animali, tanquam in particularibus causis. Quarto modo, sunt in seminibus quae ex animalibus et plantis producantur. Quae iterum comparantur ad alios effectus particulares, sicut primordiales causae universales ad primos effectus productos." Aquinas, *Sum Theol.*, I, q. 115, a. 2, c. F.-J. Thonnard, an Augustinian of the Assumption, learned in St. Augustine, says, also reverentially, of this citation, "Here . . . St. Thomas offers a fine solution. He identifies the seminal powers with the active and *passive* powers which are, in his view, the principles of generation and of natural movements. He also envisions them first, as being in the Divine Ideas; secondly, they ". . . are in the elements of the world where they were simultaneously produced by a principle as in the universal causes; thirdly, they are in those things which are produced by the universal causes according to the successions of time, as, for instance, in this plant or in this animal, as in particular causes; fourthly, they are in the seeds which are produced from animals and from plants." *A short history of philosophy*, (Paris: Desclée & Cie., 1956), p. 257; Aquinas, *ibid.* [Thonnard's commentary approximates a translation. L. Gl.] "St. Thomas certainly employed the name, *rationes seminales*, but he meant thereby primarily the active forces of concrete objects, e.g. the active power which controls the generation of living things and restricts it to the same species, not the doctrine that there are inchoate forms in prime matter. This last theory he either rejected or said that it did not fit in with the teaching of St. Augustine . . ." F. Copleston, *A history of philosophy*, Image Books (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1962), Vol. 2, part 2, p. 306, note 4 (chap. 33).



St. Thomas thinks of a science, not primarily in relation to the subject knowing, the mind possessing it, but to the object known, the realities it studies. Theology has for its basis, its knowable object the demonstrable reality of God and it is therefore a demonstrable science. In theology, as in the physical sciences, the object studied provides the principles by which it ought to be studied and the principles of organization. Ideas do not prove existence in either physical or theological science. God's existence is proved from the experience of created being, not from an idea in our minds.

Point Five of the first part of the thesis states: For St. Thomas, theology is a demonstrative science; for St. Bonaventure, an affective one. Much of this point depends on the distinguished testimony of Richard McKeon. The truth of the matter may be apparent to any who have read this far and it may be that Prof. McKeon merely gives names ("demonstrative," "affective,") to realities already clearly known.

### *1. St. Thomas: A Demonstrative Science*

Thomas was a disciple of St. Albert the Great, of whom Weisheipl says that he made a:

"...monumental presentation of the whole of human knowledge to the Latin West, paraphrasing and explaining all the known works of Aristotle and pseudo-Aristotle, adding contributions from the Arabs, and even entirely "new sciences."<sup>210</sup>

Among the Latin schoolmen, Albert was the first to make the Aristotelian approach to the physical world his own and to defend its autonomy against "the error of Plato."<sup>211</sup>

St. Thomas's concept of theology was based on his ideas of the sciences, of their nature and order, which, in turn, was based on the Aristotelian metaphysics of matter, form, and existence. Aquinas was convinced that this scientific logic, physics, and metaphysics were the correct means for acquiring a scientific understanding of the world. They were also the model for his unification of *Christian* experience, for his scientific theology.<sup>212</sup>

Divine science, for him, was a demonstrative, not an affective, science. Divine reality is knowable, thus providing a subject matter to be set in order according to its own principles or methods.<sup>213</sup> In a demonstrative science, one establishes principles and argues to conclusions. When St. Thomas wrote an

<sup>210</sup> *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Albert the Great, St.," 255b.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.* 256d.

<sup>212</sup> McCool, p. 386.

<sup>213</sup> McKeon, p. S32.

exposition on the *Sentences*, he was not interpreting the opinions of the author. He was setting in order a subject matter according to its own proper principles.

He was constructing a demonstrative science, theology. This science has a subject matter distinct from other sciences and therefore it has methods of proceeding different from their methods. Its method is argumentative, first by authorities and then by reasons and natural likenesses. The natural likenesses lead the mind, like a child led by the hand, to principles beyond its natural understanding. This way, of demonstrative science, is different from St. Bonaventure's manner of proceeding to construct theology as an affective, not a demonstrative, science.

#### AFFECTIVITY IN ST. THOMAS

While St. Thomas did not look on theology as an affective science, he did see it had a relation to human affection, to will and desire: His view of theology is far from St. Bonaventure's but he does place *sacra doctrina* in the context of religion, of man's movement toward God. That inner orientation is what makes theology necessary.<sup>214</sup> Thomas's theology focused on God and the aspects of human activity "through which a man is ordered to the perfect knowledge of God, in which eternal happiness consists."<sup>215</sup>

#### DEMONSTRATION IN SCIENCE

The scope or extent of theology reaches beyond God alone. In proving this, the Common Doctor shows that he conceives theology after the manner of other sciences. He will seek in religious studies a rigor and objectivity comparable to what is found in geometry and medicine. They have demonstrations and means of demonstration. So shall theology. And thus, it must be a demonstrative science:

The object of any cognoscitive habit has two things: viz., that which is materially known, which is like the material object; and that through which it is known, which is the formal aspect of the object. As in the science of geometry, the conclusions are materially known; but the means of demonstration are the formal reason of knowing, through which the conclusions are known. So therefore in faith, if we consider the formal aspect of the object, it is nothing other than the first truth: for the faith of which we speak assents to anything only because it is revealed by God; therefore it depends on the divine truth itself as on a means. But if we consider materially that to which faith assents, it is not only God himself, but also many other things. These fall under the assent of faith only accord-

<sup>214</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, 1, 1, 1. In Buckley, p. S63, n. 24.

<sup>215</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, 1, 1, 4; In Buckley, pp. S62f, n. 25.

ing as they have some order to God: so far, that is, man is helped by some effects of the Divinity to tend to the enjoyment of God.<sup>216</sup>

#### METHOD OF DEMONSTRATIVE SCIENCES IN AQUINAS: FROM OBJECT KNOWN, NOT FROM KNOWING SUBJECT

McKeon shows how St. Thomas derives the method of demonstrative sciences from their subject matter:

In his *Commentary on the De Trinitate of Boethius*, Aquinas treats the division of the speculative sciences in two questions: question 5 on the division of speculative science according to subject matter and question 6 on the modes which are attributed to speculative science. Natural philosophy is about things in motion and in matter; mathematical consideration is without matter and motion; divine science is about things that are without matter and motion. The objects of these three kinds of sciences are three kinds of "things"....<sup>217</sup>

These "things" are not, for the most part, what we ordinarily call "things." They are the aspects and qualities studied in different kinds of science, or in philosophy, or theology. They are also called "speculables."

"Natural philosophy" is much like what most people think of today as "biology," but with less measurement and more general reflection. This "natural philosophy" considers, McKeon says, "things in motion and in matter." "Motion" to the medievals meant any successive, step-by-step change (not instantaneous). They included change in place – what *we* call "motion" – change in color, sound, heat, whatever. The steady growth of a tree is "motion." Also, the change of the color of its leaves from summer green to autumn gold. Or changes in sound, resistance, heat and cold, taste, smell, etc. Moderns can *notice* a change in, e.g., odor but do not call it "motion." "Matter" is the measurable,

<sup>216</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, 1, 1. Utrum objectum fidei sit veritas prima? ...cuiuslibet cognoscitivi habitus objectum duo habet: scilicet id quod materialiter cognoscitur, quod est sicut materiale objectum; et id per quod cognoscitur, quod est formalis ratio objecti. Sicut in scientia geometriae materialiter scita sunt conclusiones; formalis vero ratio sciendi sunt media demonstrationis, per quae conclusiones cognoscuntur. Sic igitur in fide, si consideremus formalem rationem objecti, nihil est aliud quam veritas prima: non enim fides de qua loquimur assentit alicui nisi quia est a Deo revelatum; unde ipsi veritati divinae innititur tamquam medio. Si vero consideremus materialiter ea quibus fides assentit, non solum est ipse Deus, sed etiam multa alia. Quae tamen sub assensu fidei non cadunt nisi secundum quod habent aliquem ordinem ad Deum: prout scilicet per aliquos Divinitatis effectus homo adjuvatur ad tendendum in divinam fruitionem. Et ideo etiam ex hac parte objectum fidei est quodammodo veritas prima, inquantum nihil cadit sub fidei nisi in ordine ad Deum: sicut etiam obiectum medicinae est sanitas, quia nihil medicina considerat nisi in ordine ad sanitatem.

<sup>217</sup> McKeon, pp. S46f.

dimensioned reality in which these changing qualities are found. Natural philosophy – and today's biology or nature study – is about changeable matter.

"Mathematical consideration is without matter and motion," McKeon tells us. Euclid has no theorems about the difference between pink triangles and purple or about the changes in figures drawn, e.g., on an expanding balloon. He leaves these aside. Some say his constructions are unreal: reality has qualities like color and sound; reality changes. At whatever cost, mathematics lets all that go. It may really *be* there but math does not consider it. "Mathematical consideration is without matter and motion."

"Divine science," he goes on, "is about things that are without matter and motion." "Divine science" is "theology," Aristotle's word for metaphysics. It studies "things" like God, angels, and the human soul. These "things" or subject-matters really have no matter. God has no "motion" or change of any kind. Angels change but not the continuous, flowing change called "motion." When "divine science" restricts itself to God and angels, it is considering things that have no matter, no "motion." That is different from mathematics. Mathematics, in its *consideration*, just *ignores* the matter and "motion," of our changing sense-world. "Divine science" goes where they do not exist.

"Divine science" sometimes ignores real matter-based qualities, just as geometry does. Theology and metaphysics study humans, leaving out much matter and motion, speaking only of substance, quality, action, etc, *as if* we were immaterial and "motionless." But divine science centers, obviously, on God, who is truly above both matter and motion.

Thus Aristotle and, following him, St. Thomas, distinguish the methods of sciences, and the sciences themselves, according to the subject matters studied. Sciences, for them, are many, not just one.<sup>218</sup>

McKeon says:

The modes or ways of the speculative sciences are also differentiated by process or object. *Natural* things should be treated *rationably* (*rationabiliter*) in natural science. *Mathematical* things should be treated *disciplinably* (*disciplinariter*) in mathematical science. *Divine* things should be treated *intelligibly* (*intelligibiliter*) in divine science. Judgment of divine things exceeds imagination and sense; judgment of mathematical leads to conclusions testable by imagination but not by sense; judgment of natural leads to conclusions testable by sense as well as imagination. After Boethius "naturals," "mathematicals," and "divines" were the things, and "rationably," "disciplinably," and "intelligibly" were modes of knowing which determined and distinguished the speculative or theoretical sciences.<sup>219</sup>

<sup>218</sup> Cf. McKeon, p. S47.

<sup>219</sup> McKeon, p. S47.

In his commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*, St. Thomas distinguishes "physics," or natural philosophy<sup>220</sup> from mathematics and metaphysics by its subject matter. It is about *natural* things. Nature is the principle of motion. So natural philosophy, "physics," is about things which have in themselves a principle of motion.<sup>221</sup> ("Motion" for Aristotle and Aquinas includes growth, acquiring a new color, strengthening, and almost every kind of change.) Metaphysics is about being as being. Mathematics is about "intelligible matter," matter purely as extended or numberable, with all sense-qualities left aside. In all these, the science and its method are distinguished by their object or the "thing" considered.

For the Angelic Doctor, God is not known *a priori*, through considering the concept of God. He is known *a posteriori*, starting from visible things and proceeding according to five ways. The *Summa Theologiae* is divided into three parts and is constructed according to three ways, depending on the three subject matters of theology: God, the beginning of all, man and his response, and the God-man, the restorer of the broken order.<sup>222</sup> Here, again, method follows object known and studied.

#### KNOWLEDGE, IN THE NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL ORDERS

St. Thomas' clear distinction between philosophy and theology depends on two of his great accomplishments: his explanation of the nature and relation of the sciences and his clear distinction between the natural and supernatural orders. The distinction between the natural and supernatural orders depends, in turn, on his Aristotelian distinction of substance and accident. Human nature, or substance, remains, even when elevated to the supernatural order. This elevation does not destroy our nature.

The human person acquires faith, the knowledge proper to the supernatural order. But he retains reason, the knowledge proper to the natural order. He is now called to be conformed to Christ and to participate, to some degree, in the divine nature, a supernatural end. But he is still conscious of the natural law, his obligation to be a good, a fully human being, which is his natural end.

Even the effects, remaining in us, of original sin do not do away with the goodness and the powers of human nature. Our intellect is darkened and so even naturally knowable truths about God cannot be known by everyone, easily, with firm assurance, and with no admixture of error.<sup>223</sup> Our will is weakened

<sup>220</sup> Approximately biology or "life sciences" today.

<sup>221</sup> McKeon, p. S 47f.

<sup>222</sup> McKeon, p. S34.

<sup>223</sup> First Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith*, no.33. Cited in *The teaching of the Catholic Church*, ed. K. Rahner (N.Y.: Alba House, 1967), p.32.

and we cannot avoid sin consistently. But our reason is not totally incapable of knowing God to some extent, from the things created, nor is our will totally incapable of ever obeying the natural law – or of feeling a laudable regret when we disobey. Our natural potencies retain the intrinsic ability to attain their proper objects. Our human nature and its basic potencies are not destroyed or taken away, either by elevation to grace or by degradation to sin.<sup>224</sup> “As faith must be distinguished from reason and grace from nature, scientific theology must be distinguished from scientific philosophy as it is distinguished from pure faith.”<sup>225</sup>

## 2. St. Bonaventure: An Affective Science

### AN AFFECTIVE HABIT

For St. Bonaventure, theology is an affective science. At the beginning of his exposition of the *Sentences*, he defines theology as “an affective habit.”<sup>226</sup> His reason for this is that cognition, action, and passion are all united inseparably. Emotion is the moving force in all knowledge, which is a kind of action. He “warns that he who does theology without putting it into practice will do more harm than good.”<sup>227</sup> He insists that emotion enters into theology in a special way, unlike the less moving truths of geometry:

Such is the knowledge which is taught in this book. For this knowledge aids faith, and faith is in the intellect in such a way that by its very nature it is oriented to move affectivity. And this is obvious. For the knowledge that Christ has died for us and similar knowledge moves a man to love unless he is unmovable in his sins. This is not knowledge like that other, that the diameter is incommensurate with a side.<sup>228</sup>

Quia veritas de Deo, per rationem investigata, a paucis, et per longum tempus, et cum admixtione multorum errorum, homini proveniret, a cuius tamen veritatis cognitione, dependet tota hominis salus, quae in Deo est. Ut igitur salus hominibus et convenientius et certius proveniat, necessarium fuit quod de divinis per divinam revelationem instruantur. Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I, 1, 1 [Because the truth about God, investigated by reason, comes to man from few, through a long time, and with the mixture of many errors. Yet all human salvation, which is in God, depends on the knowledge of this truth. In order, therefore, that salvation might come to humans more fittingly and more certainly, it was necessary that they be instructed about divine things through divine revelation.]; cf. *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, 2, 4, *C. Gent.*, I, 4, *De Veritate*, q. 14, a. 10.

<sup>224</sup> McCool, p. 387.

<sup>225</sup> McCool, p. 387.

<sup>226</sup> Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, Proemii, q. 3, conclus.; I, p. 13. “habitus affectivus.”

<sup>227</sup> C. Carpenter, *Theology as the road to holiness in St. Bonaventure* (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), p. 19; Bonaventure, *Collationes de septem donis Spiritus sancti*, 4, 18; V, p. 477.

<sup>228</sup> Bonaventure, *In I Sent.* Proemii, q. 3, conclus.; I, p. 13; cf. *De reductione artium ad theologiam* 26; 5:325b. Talis est cognitio tradita in hoc libro. Nam cognitio haec iuvat fidem, et fides sic est

The way in an affective science is a journey from things perceived and ends sought by the mind to the source of truths and the inspiration of loves, which transcends and structures things and thoughts and which is itself supremely cognoscible and supremely lovable. From the point of view of the wayfarer or the mind there is only one such journey and, therefore, only one theology, one philosophy, one science. But despite this unity of science, men bring various emotional impediments to the journey. Bonaventura called one of his works *The Itinerary of the Mind to God*. All the works of Bonaventura are about that itinerary, treating different cognitive, emotive, and practical aspects of problems encountered on it, different orders and relations of things known, and different faculties of the mind, which are the sources of the problems and of their solutions.<sup>229</sup>

#### HIERARCHIZATION: REMEDY FOR AFFECTIVE DISORDER

Original sin deforms our soul and their affective powers. Bonaventure tells us our souls must be healed:

Against the deformed condition of the soul, St. Bonaventure affords a remedy that is characteristic of his spiritual anthropology. He calls it the hierarchization of the soul, using the concept and terminology of Dionysius Areopagite.

Dionysius defines hierarchy as follows:

"In my opinion, hierarchy is a sacred order ("taxis hiera"), a state of understanding ("koa episteme") and an activity ("koa energia") approximating as closely as possible to the divine. And it is uplifted to the imitation of God in proportion to the enlightenment divinely given to it."<sup>230</sup>

As the Seraphic Doctor took the notion of hierarchies from Pseudo-Dionysius, so he adopted it from Proclus: "...The thought of Pseudo-Dionysius ...is directly influenced by the latest forms of Neo-Platonism, as found in Proclus. No other early Christian writer was so clearly influenced by a particular philosopher."<sup>231</sup>

The soul has to be reordered according to a process of hierarchization that restructures the soul according to its place in God's design and to its true image, that is, both among other creatures above and below it, and within itself.<sup>232</sup> This agrees with what Tavard tells us about St. Bonaventure's concept of understanding: "...In the Bonaventurian sense of the word ["understand," L. Gl.]

in intellectu, ut, quantum est de sui ratione, nata sit movere affectum. Et hoc patet. Nam haec cognitio, quod Christus pro nobis mortuus est, et consimiles, nisi sit homo peccator et durus, movet ad amorem; non sic ista: quod diameter sit asymeter costae.

<sup>229</sup> McKeon, p. S33.

<sup>230</sup> Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy*, chap. 3; quoted in C. Carpenter, *Way to holiness*, p. 45; transl. by C. Luibhéid in *Pseudo-Dionysius; the complete works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), p. 153.

<sup>231</sup> *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, "Pseudo-Dionysius," VI, 510.

<sup>232</sup> C. Carpenter, *Way to holiness*, p. 45.

...to understand a point of faith is to place it in its proper setting in relation to other points of faith, to Scripture, the tradition, the requirements of piety, reason, and spiritual esthetics."<sup>233</sup> Modern people often "understand" something by taking it apart, down to its smallest components, although a new theory, called by some "contextualism" seems to revive some elements of the medieval Bonaventurian hierarchization.<sup>234</sup>

#### HIERARCHIZATION: STILL VIABLE?

This remedy of hierarchization, like much of Bonaventure seems alien to contemporaries, excepting perhaps the "contextualist" minority. But Carpenter insists it is still viable:

The process by which the soul is restructured and the influence this has on theology can still be a valid approach to understanding what conversion brings to the study of theology. Bernard Lonergan has given this special emphasis in his works, and sees it as the effect of grace.<sup>235</sup> What Bonaventure calls hierarchization, Lonergan refers to as conversion

Foundational reality, as distinct from its expression, is conversion: religious, moral, and intellectual. Normally it is intellectual conversion as the fruit of both religious and moral conversion; it is moral conversion as the fruit of religious conversion; and it is religious conversion as the fruit of God's gift of his grace.<sup>236</sup>

When speaking of the threefold conversion (intellectual, moral, and religious), Lonergan affirms that it is "not a set of propositions that a theologian utters, but a fundamental and momentous change in the human reality that a theologian is."<sup>237</sup>... "What changes is the interpretation the theologian gives to what he is learning. And this is so because "the converted have a self to understand that is quite different from the self that the unconverted have to understand."<sup>238</sup>

### 3. Comparison of the Two Theologies

It has been shown that the Franciscan Doctor conceives of a science in relation to its subject, the mind which possesses it, the Dominican in relation to its object, the realities it discusses. For the first, theology is an affective science because cognition, action, and passion are inseparable. Emotion provides the motive force in all knowledge, because knowing is a kind of action. Our in-

<sup>233</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 49

<sup>234</sup> Cf. above, p. 18, n. 15.

<sup>235</sup> B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, Ltd.: 1972), p. 120.

<sup>236</sup> B. Lonergan, *Method*, pp. 267f.

<sup>237</sup> B. Lonergan, *Method*, p. 270.

<sup>238</sup> B. Lonergan, *Method*, p. 271; C. Carpenter, *Way to holiness*, pp. 52f. Bonaventure sees Mary's distribution of grace as hierarchical. See below, Part II, Chap. 4, p. 249.



telleets are naturally connected to God. God is the basic principle of all knowledge and is known, or at least knowable, in any other knowledge. The idea of God, always present, more or less clearly in the mind, proves God's existence, through the ontological argument. We always have some kind of knowledge of God. If there appears to be a need to prove his existence, that is from our blindness, arising from concupiscence, and our failure to reflect on what we already, in some way, know. It is not because he lacks knowability or must borrow evidence from creatures through an *a posteriori* proof based on them.<sup>239</sup>

For the Angelic Doctor, theology is a demonstrative science. It is based on a knowable object, the reality of God. The knowable object provides a subject matter with its own proper principles and methods of organization. This is true both in theology and the physical sciences. The principles of theology are revealed, unlike the principles of the physical sciences, which are taken from experience. The principles of a science cannot be proved by that science itself, whether in a study based on revelation or in considerations of sensible experience. And ideas do not prove existence in either kind of science. God's existence is proven from our experience of created being, not from the presence of an idea in our minds.<sup>240</sup>

Bonaventura conceives of science relative to the mind of which it is a product and a possession or habit.... Aquinas conceives of science relative to the things whose properties and relations it analyzes and presents.<sup>241</sup> ...These are two conceptions of science applied to the common subject matter and the common vocabulary which the commentaries [of Bonaventure and Thomas., L. Gl.] share.<sup>242</sup>

An affective science proceeds in an investigative and a reasoning manner, much like a demonstrative science. But an affective science is a practical science and its purpose is to produce, in the knowing subject, laudable opinions and virtuous deeds.<sup>243</sup> The purpose of a demonstrative science is to know objective reality. Its mode of procedure is to establish principles based on its subject matter and to form conclusions by reasoning. St. Thomas' commentary on the *Sentences* was not an interpretation of the personal opinions of its author. It was the construction of demonstrations in the science of theology, in order to know that science's object. Theology is distinct in its principles and methods from other sciences. Its mode of procedure is adapted to its own subject matter. It uses reason to draw conclusions about faith, to know divine matters.<sup>244</sup>

<sup>239</sup> McKeon, p. S32f.

<sup>240</sup> McKeon, p. S32f.

<sup>241</sup> McKeon, p. S32.

<sup>242</sup> McKeon, p. S32.

<sup>243</sup> As the preacher tries to do each Sunday.

<sup>244</sup> McKeon, pp. S32f.

The manner of proceeding in theology, according to St. Thomas, is argumentative, first by authorities, then by reasons and natural likenesses. The role of the natural likenesses or similitudes is to lead the mind, as a child is led by the hand, to an understanding of the principles of faith, of themselves beyond the grasp of human understanding.<sup>245</sup>

McKeon holds that, as statements of fact, the teachings of St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure are in simple contradiction. One's conclusions must be true, the other's, false. Our knowledge of God's existence must be founded *either* on the idea of God *or* on our experience of visible things. The universe must *either* have had a beginning in time *or* be eternal.

Their teachings, McKeon says, if taken as abstract dogmas, can be seen, not only as opposed to each other but, if drawn out to their logical conclusions, as opposed to the truth. Bonaventure's idea of an intellect connatural with God, filled with his truth, can be seen as the heresy of pantheism, or of a world-soul active in all humans as a single agent intellect, which Averroes taught and which was condemned as heretical. Thomas' opinion of two kinds of truth, one of revealed theology and one of natural, philosophical, theology, led some to believe in two *contradictory* truths, one of theology and one of philosophy. This also was condemned as heretical Averroism.<sup>246</sup>

However, he says that if we put these conclusions under the heading of investigation of a common subject matter, the same opposed opinions can be seen as complementary. "If these differences are considered [as a proposal of] ... inquiry concerning a common subject, the different conclusions are alternative and supplementary statements of related truths and may contribute to further insight and inquiry."<sup>247</sup>

He goes on to say that the affective approach is found in experimental science, both in Roger Bacon and in twentieth century physics, not just in mystical intuition, and that the demonstrative method is found in Meister Eckhart and in transcendental understanding, not only in empirical science.<sup>248</sup>

Some aspects of this "further insight and inquiry" are pointed out by McKeon:

Poetics becomes a part of logic for Aquinas, whereas for Bonaventure it becomes an important aspect of theology as an affective science, and the beginnings of systematic aesthetic speculation may be found in the affective theologies of Alexander of Hales and Bonaventura. Theology for Thomas Aquinas, on the other hand,

<sup>245</sup> McKeon, p. S33.

<sup>246</sup> McKeon, p. S35.

<sup>247</sup> McKeon, p. S35.

<sup>248</sup> McKeon, pp. S35f.

is a speculative science, and the separation of natural theology from revealed theology followed from his treatment of the principles of theology.<sup>249</sup>

McKeon ends his essay on Sts. Thomas and Bonaventure by saying:

We might learn from them to use the past as a commonplace of inquiry and to ask not whether what they said about the sentences of Greek philosophers or Biblical interpreters is true or false but whether it suggests new ideas about the philosophy of Aristotle or Plato and about the problems of philosophy.

We might learn from Bonaventura and Aquinas how to use commonplaces to focus on the same problem and move from the battles of schools to common inquiry from different points of view. We would then celebrate their seven-hundredth anniversary not by searching for something they said which is true but by learning to recognize the insights which led them along fruitful lines of inquiry in which we might begin again to engage.<sup>250</sup>

St. Bonaventure kept to the old ways, saying he wished to disagree with his teachers in nothing. He accepted Aristotle grudgingly. St. Thomas accepted Aristotle wholeheartedly and was interested in changing theology, even going beyond his innovative teacher, St. Albert the Great. One point of Bonaventurian conservatism was his following of the Greek Fathers, holding that the Persons of the Trinity relate to creatures in different ways. St. Thomas says creatures relate to the one divine nature.

St. Thomas made a significant, beneficial advance in the concepts of nature and the supernatural. Some have since abused these, making the supernatural something unnecessary and somewhat unreal. But "Abusus non tollit usum." It is a valid and useful distinction. For the Angelic Doctor, the sciences are not all to be "reduced" to theology. The human intellect and the human will have

<sup>249</sup> McKeon, p. S42.

<sup>250</sup> McKeon, p. S51. Buckley also has a project for the future: "My point is not that either Bonaventure or Aquinas is uniquely correct, but that both of them make theology . . . an architectonic knowledge in serious and systematic sympathy with the sciences and arts of [the] times. The *Summa Theologiae* or the *Reductio Artium ad Theologiam* evince this contact, and the varieties of other possible ways in which this conjunction could emerge are indicated within the writings of their colleagues and successors.

"Even today, despite the enormous changes within divinity studies, it remains true to assert that, by and large, systematic theologians are relatively unimportant within American intellectual culture, that they neither enlighten nor contextualize what we are about, and that the architectonic has passed to sociology, education, and psychology, to novelists such as Thomas Mann or James Joyce, or to philosophies such as existentialism or the positivism of the unified sciences."

"If this is true, then the rearticulation of the architectonic is one of the primary tasks of contemporary theological methodology: How can theology engage the other disciplines, the arts and sciences, the various works of men?" Buckley, p. 563

some power to attain their different objects. As finite creatures, they depend on God for their acting as for their being. But they have power to act and their actions are their own. The Franciscan Master allows them much less independence, insisting on divine intervention, illumination, more than his Dominican brother.

The Angelic Doctor made good theoretical distinctions, especially in distinguishing the natural order from the supernatural. The Seraphic Doctor kept good practical combinations. Not St. Thomas, but others after him, distinguished by discarding, e.g., the supernatural and the creature's dependence on God. St. Bonaventure reminds us not to do that. Even if we decline his view of scientific theology as an affective rather than a demonstrative science, he is a good guide for the Christian life as a whole.

### **Point Six: Divergent Uses of Scripture and the Fathers**

The saints use Scripture and the Fathers in different ways. St. Thomas is more objective, interested in having a reliable text, and in the literal sense of the Bible, for itself and as a foundation of the spiritual senses. St. Bonaventure, less interested in the letter of the text, insists upon a personal, subjective preparation for Bible study and wants to go beyond a grasp of the literal meaning to grow in holiness personally, by the acquiring of various wisdoms. The Fathers help in this personal, subjective growth and also strengthen the objective understanding of Scripture, which the Seraphic Doctor emphasizes less than personal progress.

#### *1. St. Thomas*

##### USE OF SCRIPTURE

Our belief in the Divine Maternity – and St. Thomas' belief – is based on Scripture. But how well did he understand that Scripture? The poor man lived in the age of the flat earth and six twenty-four hour days of creation! Can we take him seriously? When we compare the Scriptural understandings of Sts. Thomas and Bonaventure, are we just comparing fairy tales? Can they know what Scripture really means? If not, can they understand the Divine Maternity?

We view the Angelic Doctor's scriptural science and that of other medievales through our contemporary eyes, seeing ourselves as ideal and others as vainly struggling to approximate our excellence. Father Eamon Carroll tells us about recent biblical scholarship in relation to Mary:

The most promising area for deeper understanding of the Mother of Jesus is the Scriptures. Catholic biblical scholarship has flowered in recent decades, especially since the 1943 letter by Pope Pius XII on the promotion of scriptural studies. The

biblical approach of the Vatican Council's consideration of Our Lady had ecumenical as well as catechetical and pastoral importance.<sup>251</sup>

But even our contemporary science is not all-perfect. Fr. Carroll quotes a censorious Catholic bishop, the Most Rev. Alan Clark: "Wherever Mary is to be found today ...she is there in the Bible.... Before the extremes of retreat into a barricaded fundamentalist fortress and radical criticism that is reductionist and nothing more, our separate wisdom has been found devastatingly wanting..."<sup>252</sup>

In spite of these ideological battles, our present age has many advantages over the time of Sts. Thomas and Bonaventure. Pope Pius XII, in *Divino afflante spiritu*, mentions excavations in Palestine, saying, "How much light has been derived from these explorations for the more correct and fuller understanding of the Sacred Books, all experts know,..."<sup>253</sup> Also, "Moreover ancient codices of the Sacred Books have been found and edited with discerning thoroughness; the exegesis of the Fathers of the Church has been more widely and thoroughly examined,..."<sup>254</sup> "Not only the Greek language ...is familiar to almost all students of antiquity and letters, but the knowledge of Hebrew also and of other Oriental languages has spread far and wide among literary men."<sup>255</sup> The Pontiff mentions "the aids which all branches of philology supply," and praises, "real skill in literary criticism."<sup>256</sup>

The excellence of contemporary methods does not, however, require a rejection of the medievals like St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure. To his well-founded praise of modern skills, Pope Pius joins an appreciation of scholars of the past:

...The Catholic exegete will find invaluable help in an assiduous study of those works, in which the Holy Fathers, the Doctors of the Church<sup>257</sup> and the renowned interpreters of past ages have explained the Sacred Books. For, although sometimes less instructed in profane learning and in the knowledge of languages than the scripture scholars of our time, nevertheless by reason of the office assigned to them by God in the Church, they are distinguished by a certain subtle insight into heavenly things and by a marvelous keenness of intellect, which enable them to penetrate to the very innermost meaning of the divine word and bring to light all that can help to elucidate the teaching of Christ and promote holiness of life.<sup>258</sup>

<sup>251</sup> E. Carroll, *Understanding the Mother of Jesus* (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1979), p. 13.

<sup>252</sup> E. Carroll, "Mary, the Mother of Jesus," p. 81.

<sup>253</sup> Pius XII, *Divino afflante spiritu: on promoting biblical studies*, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 35(1943): n. 11.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 12.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 15.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 16.

<sup>257</sup> Who include Ss. Thomas and Bonaventure [L. Gl].

<sup>258</sup> Pius XII, *ibid.*, n. 28.

*Divino afflante spiritu*, although often quoted as if it were solely an approval of all modern methods – and their most extreme conclusions! – gives us good reason to respect the biblical interpretation of St. Thomas and his contemporary, St. Bonaventure.

St. Thomas, though lacking the skills of the contemporary exegete was no naïve fundamentalist. He was acquainted with the biblical science of his day and, to some extent, anticipated ours. For him, Scripture was highest of the “authorities.”<sup>259</sup> Thomas’ position on the senses of Scripture is the same in the two questions appended to *Quodlibet VII* and in the *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 1, a. 10. There are, for him, two basic senses in Scripture, the literal and the spiritual. The literal sense is indicated by the words used to express the truth intended by the author, the spiritual sense, by things, persons, and events narrated to signify other things, persons, or events. The literal, or historical, sense is the basis of the spiritual sense and is the only sense valid for theological argumentation. The spiritual sense is not a personal or private interpretation, like the accommodated sense, but is a true sense, explicitly indicated as such in other parts of Scripture. It is an objective sense, intended by the Holy Spirit: for example, Christ as the New Adam, as the antitype of the brazen serpent displayed by Moses in the desert, of the paschal lamb, and so forth.

There are three kinds of spiritual senses, one for right action, two for belief. The moral or tropological sense is directed toward acting correctly and to achieving beatitude. For believing correctly, there are the allegorical, or typical, sense of the Old Testament figures signifying Christ and his Church, and the anagogical sense of the New Testament figures signifying the Heavenly Church both in its head and in its members.<sup>260</sup> He rejected the theory that nothing in the Old Testament refers expressly to Christ, that only later was the Old Testament adapted to Christ. Thomas follows the rule given by St. Jerome in his commentary on Ezechiel, that all actions recorded in the Old Testament are to be expounded in such a way that they prefigure something of Christ or his Church. He does not deny that the Hebrew Scriptures have a literal sense pertaining to the people and events in Jewish history but he concentrates on the spiritual sense, allegorical or anagogical, in which the events of the Old Testament signify Christ or his Church on earth or in heaven. For him, the spiritual sense of Hebrew Scripture is more relevant than the literal, in Christian worship and in

<sup>259</sup> S.-Th. Pinckaers, “The sources of the ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas,” in *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, trans. M. Noble (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995).

<sup>260</sup> J. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d’Aquino: His Life, Thought, and Work*, Garden City: Doubleday, 1974, 106-7.

the personal lives of Christians.<sup>261</sup> The meaning intended by the four senses of Scripture, one literal and three spiritual, is always clear. The historical or literal sense is exactly what the human and divine authors intended by the narration. The spiritual sense, founded on the literal, and explicitly claimed as such by a sacred author or tradition, refers to events and persons of a later age. It is a truth, distinct from the literal truth. Sometimes, a passage of Scripture contains all four senses, for instance, the life of Christ. The historical Jesus is the literal sense. His historical body refers, in the allegorical sense, to his Mystical Body, the Church. The moral sense shows us his actions as examples for our own. And the anagogical sense promises us, in Christ, our own eternal glory.<sup>262</sup> St. Thomas had a relatively sophisticated approach to the Bible. We may be better in some ways today but we cannot reject his views as having nothing to teach us.

#### THOMAS' USE OF THE FATHERS

In general

Catholics base their faith on the Scriptures as understood in the Church. The Fathers of the Church, ancient, orthodox, holy, are witnesses to the faith of the early Church. The Angelic – and the Seraphic – Doctor's understanding of the Fathers is second in importance only to his approach to Scripture, both for his theology in general and his teaching on Mary, Mother of God. St. Thomas was formed by the Scholastic method. At the heart of this method is the medieval "auctoritas:" the biblical text, without which there is no theology, and the patristic exposition.<sup>263</sup> He said, "The goal of Scripture, which is from the Holy Spirit, is the instruction of men. But this instruction of men from Scripture cannot take place except through the expositions of the Saints. Therefore the expositions of the Saints are from the Holy Scripture."<sup>264</sup> Although he adds that, when these expositors were speaking about things not belonging to the faith as such, they said many things on their own and therefore could err in these. And he says one need not believe these expositions in the way one must believe Scripture. But still he sees in their work, at least sometimes, a special charism or gift of the Holy Spirit guiding their expositions.<sup>265</sup> He had frequent recourse to the patristic collections in favor in the Middle Ages, particularly the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard and the *Decretum Gratiani*. What was remarkable

<sup>261</sup> Weisheipl, *op. cit.*, 306

<sup>262</sup> Weisheipl, 107

<sup>263</sup> J. Moudry, *The influence of the patristic "auctoritates" of St. Thomas Aquinas on the doctrine of penance in the Summa Theologiae, IIIa, Qq.84-90* (Rome: Officium Libri Cattolici, 1962), p. 17.

<sup>264</sup> Aquinas, *Quodl.*, XII, q. 17; cf. Principe, "Interpretation," 111

<sup>265</sup> Aquinas, *Quodl.*, XX, q.17

in the midst of this general practice of borrowing from patristic collections was St. Thomas' respect for the original sources he was using. This is seen in the care he takes to identify the original source even when his knowledge of it is indirect. And he was eager to have access to the original sources, especially in regard to St. Augustine. His remark about his willingness to trade the city of Paris for a copy of St. John Chrysostom's commentary on Matthew illustrates his desire for first-hand knowledge. It in no way derogates from his respect for original sources to point out how he frequently turned to secondary collections for his documentation. It was often unavoidable.<sup>266</sup> St. Thomas quoted St. Augustine very frequently for he was the greatest of the Church Fathers, in the minds of Scholastics, the theologian *par excellence*. A medieval master summoned his authority as often as possible.<sup>267</sup> A contemporary of ours says in the *Summa Theologiae* alone, there are some two thousand quotations from the Bishop of Hippo and they are obviously not merely decorative.<sup>268</sup> He also researched the Greek Fathers and, during his whole life, took care to develop his acquaintance with the Fathers.<sup>269</sup> A frequent practice of the Angelic Doctor was the placing of a text in the *sed contra* position, not as a source of the doctrine to be developed in the article, but rather as an authoritative justification for the doctrinal position, which the article then developed quasi-independently of the content of the citation. The patristic text was used to establish that a given doctrinal position was tenable and defensible. Having secured his position authoritatively, he then explored its presentation speculatively.<sup>270</sup> Principe suggests St. Thomas may have been less critical of such texts, which were not part of his own argument: "...It can be concluded that, when he was concerned with the meaning of the text itself and was not simply using the text as an ornament for an argument or as confirmation of a position already reached by other means, Thomas Aquinas had a quite sophisticated and skillful knowledge of hermeneutical method".<sup>271</sup> He shows his awareness of the importance of having a good text by some penetrating remarks about problems of translation, of different language usage, and even of different mentalities. He says it is the translator's duty, when he is translating matters touching on Catholic faith, to preserve the meaning but to change the mode of expression according to the proper significance of the language into which he translates: "It is clear that

<sup>266</sup> Moudry, 78-9

<sup>267</sup> Moudry, 83

<sup>268</sup> J.-P. Torrell, *Saint Thomas d'Aquin: maître spirituel* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, a.s.)

<sup>269</sup> Pinckaers, *Sources*, chapter, "Sources of St. Thomas."

<sup>270</sup> Moudry, 93-4

<sup>271</sup> W. Principe, "Thomas Aquinas' principles for the interpretation of patristic studies." *Studies in Medieval Culture*, 8 & 9, ed. J. Sommerfeldt, 1976, p. 116



if things written in Latin are expressed in popular language, this expression will be unsuitable if it is done word for word. Much more is it no wonder if some doubt remains when statements in one language are translated word for word into a different language."<sup>272</sup> St. Thomas has care for the exact text, careful translation, and attention to usage.<sup>273</sup> He is aware that the development of ideas, especially through opposing errors, led later Fathers to speak with greater care and precision than had earlier ones. This sort of development can happen in an individual Father. Here we find a remarkably clear and perceptive view of the need for historical setting and perspective in appreciating statements of the Fathers, especially when they seem to go against later doctrines of the Church, which were developed more explicitly as new questions arose in human consciousness.<sup>274</sup> "Hence, if anything is found in the sayings of the ancient doctors that is said with less care than is observed by moderns, these sayings are not to be despised or rejected. But neither ought they to be given further application, but rather they should be interpreted reverently".<sup>275</sup>

Such reverential interpretation is an application to patristic texts of the principle of the analogy of faith that St. Thomas developed primarily for use in interpreting the Scriptures. For him, the truth of one text of Scripture, because it has God as its principal author, must be in accord with the truths of other texts of Scripture and with the faith of the Church, and the interpreter must seek this harmony of truth. So, in the case of difficult patristic texts, when they bear on matters of faith, reverential interpretation is an attempt, labored at times, no doubt, to bring the text of the Father into harmony with the belief of the Church. If, however, there is question only of a personal opinion of a Father about a point that is not of faith, Thomas will be respectful but he will not hesitate to disagree. Thomas was aware that the historical background of the authors, if known, can be an aid in interpreting them. For example, he says Basil and Augustine and several others follow the opinion of Plato, while Pseudo-Dionysius almost everywhere follows Aristotle: For Basil and Augustine and many of the saints, in philosophical matters which do not pertain to the faith, follow the opinion of Plato... but Dionysius almost everywhere follows Aristotle."<sup>276</sup>

<sup>272</sup> *Graecorum*, XL, A 71, 66-72; cf. Principe, W. "Thomas Aquinas' principles for the interpretation of patristic studies." *Studies in medieval culture*, 8 & 9, ed. J. Sommerfeldt, 1976, p.113.

<sup>273</sup> Principe, p. 113

<sup>274</sup> Principe, p. 114

<sup>275</sup> *Graecorum*, XL, A 71, 39-44; Principe 114-5

<sup>276</sup> *II Sent.*, d. 14, q. 1, a. 2 "Basilus enim et Augustinus et plures sanctorum sequuntur in philosophicis quae ad fidem non spectant opiniones Platonis ...Dionysius autem fere ubique sequitur

Later he learned Pseudo-Dionysius was a Platonist and had to be understood from that perspective. "For the most part he uses the style and manner of speaking which the Platonists use."<sup>277</sup> He mentions the importance of discerning the intention of the author and gives this as a reason for his interpretation of certain texts of Chrysostom, of Augustine, Damascene, and Pseudo-Dionysius. He calls attention to the role of a particular context of a statement as an aid in interpreting the statement. And he holds the primacy of meaning over the literal signification of a word, and the primacy of usage over the proper signification of a word. From this, Principe concludes, as above, that, when he was truly concerned with analyzing the text and not simply using it as an ornament or a confirmation of an independent conclusion, Thomas Aquinas had a sophisticated and skillful hermeneutic.<sup>278</sup>

#### ST. THOMAS' USE OF THE FATHERS IN RELATION TO MARY

Fr. Jelly tells us of two Fathers' opinion on St. Joseph: "...A theory had gained some currency during the time of Sts. Jerome and Augustine which attempted to explain the "brothers" as children of Joseph by a previous marriage. Both men clearly rejected this opinion because they were convinced of Joseph's virginity as spouse of Our Lady and foster-father of the Lord."<sup>279</sup> St. Thomas quotes St. Jerome: "Some ...suspect the brothers of the Lord are from another wife of Joseph" and continues,<sup>280</sup> "But, as Jerome says, against Helvidius, we ought rather to believe Joseph remained a virgin."<sup>281</sup>

And he cites St. Augustine:

Augustine says, in II *Concerning the agreement of the Evangelists*, that the Evangelist thought it was not right that Joseph be separated from the marriage to Mary (since he said Joseph was the husband of Mary) because she bore Christ not from intercourse with him but as a virgin. For by this example he manifestly insinuates to the married faithful that marriage can remain and be called such, with no sexual joining of the body, if continence is observed by equal consent.<sup>282</sup>

Aristotelem."

<sup>277</sup> *Comment...* 'De Divin. Nom.'; cf. Principe. "...Plerumque utitur stylo et modo loquendi quod utebantur platonici."

<sup>278</sup> Principe, 115-6

<sup>279</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, p. 89.

<sup>280</sup> Jerome, *Adv. Helvidium*, no. 19. "...Quidam ...de alia uxore Joseph fratres Domini suspicantur...": "Joseph autem, sicut Heironymus dicit, contra Helvidium...."

<sup>281</sup> Aquinas, III, 28, 3, ad 5. "...magis credendus est virgo permansisse..."

<sup>282</sup> Cap. I. ...Augustinus dicit, in II *de Consensu Evangelist.*, non est fas ut Joseph ob hoc a coniugio Mariae separandum Evangelista putaret (cum dixit Joseph virum Mariae) quod non ex eius concubitu, sed virgo peperit Christum. Hoc enim exemplo manifeste insinuat fidelibus

The Angelic Doctor also quotes St. Augustine to support his thesis that Mary was a virgin in childbirth, "It would not be right that integrity be violated by the coming of him who had come to heal corrupted things."<sup>283</sup>

The information provided here about his use of Scripture and the Fathers of the Church assures us that St. Thomas' theology in general and his teaching on the Mother of God in particular, will be founded on the best available sources and be profoundly in harmony with Catholic faith.

## 2. St. Bonaventure

### USE OF SCRIPTURE

It will take a little longer to analyze and explain the Seraphic Doctor's use of his theological sources, the Bible and the Fathers, than it took for St. Thomas. His methods are less familiar to us, more "strange" than Thomas'. Bonaventure is regarded, with some reason, as less scientific than Aquinas, more sentimental, more devout, more "medieval." And, as we shall see, he is more affective, less rigorous. But we shall also find he has much science, much logic, much rigor.

Like the Angelic Doctor, St. Bonaventure founds both his general theology and his thought on Mary, Mother of God, on Scripture, carefully studied. Tavard tells us:

How important was Scripture in his eyes clearly appears from his prologue to the *Breviloquium*, in which Bonaventure measures the "breadth," the "length," the "height," and the "depth" of Scripture, that is the multitude of its parts, its description of times and ages, its description of the ordered hierarchies of the universe and the Church, and the multitude of its mystical senses and meanings.<sup>284</sup>

However, the manner in which he presents texts from the Bible will be unfamiliar to the modern reader:

Bonaventure's method in commenting on Scripture does not help contemporary readers to see the broad lines of his thought. For he comments chiefly through extensive quotations from the Old and the New Testaments, seeking whatever in the Bible can illustrate, literally or spiritually, the topic at hand. Then the picture of Mary as a young woman of Nazareth who becomes the mother of the Lord tends to disappear behind a screen of biblical verses which modern readers may not find appropriate. Their connection with Mary is associative rather than strictly typological. Bonaventure's attention has been attracted by similarities in wording between some remote passage of the Old Testament and the text of the

coniugatis, etiam servata pari consensu continentia, posse permanere vocarique coniugium, non permixto corporis sexu.

<sup>283</sup> Aquinas, III, 28, 2, c; Augustine, *In Natali Domini*, sermo 5. "Fas non erat ut per eius adventum violaretur integritas, qui venerat sanare corrupta."

<sup>284</sup> G.Tavard, *The Forthbringer of God: St. Bonaventure on the Virgin Mary*, (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press. 1989) pp. 57f.

*Magnificat*; and he makes as much of it as the exegesis, the spiritual theology and the Marian devotion of his time will allow. But this traditional method, which was still modern when Bonaventure practiced it, has now become generally obsolete. What must have been to the advantage of his thirteenth-century readers has in fact turned into a hindrance for the contemporary taste and look.<sup>285</sup>

Moreover, Bonaventure's extensive culling of scriptural quotations and his search for biblical episodes illustrative of the points in hand are enhanced – or, as some may feel, complicated – by similarly quoting from the Fathers of the Church<sup>286</sup> and more recent authors, not least from St. Bernard, the great singer of Mary in the twelfth century. This quest for “authorities” in the medieval sense of the term was destined to strengthen Bonaventure's theology and interpretations in the eyes of his scholastic readers. It may, indeed, still interest contemporary historians who may wonder about the sources of Bonaventure's thought. Yet it also, unavoidably, acts as an obstacle for the average reader today. With these several handicaps, however, Bonaventure's reflections on Mary may still speak to us, for their theological and Christological depths remain apparent through the successive layers of his exegetical method.<sup>287</sup>

We need not to reject this method, common in the Middle Ages and derived from even earlier practice, but to *understand it*, learn how to interpret it, and see how it affects his theology in general.

The following, on St. Bonaventure, Scripture and revelation, depends greatly on Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure*.<sup>288</sup> Again, this is more time and space than was spent on St. Thomas but the Franciscan Master does not enjoy quite the towering reputation of his Dominican colleague. Also, his approach to the Bible is very different from our contemporary analyses and requires more introduction than St. Thomas', which is more familiar and, thus, more acceptable to us.

In Scripture interpretation, as elsewhere, St. Bonaventure emphasizes more than others do, the person knowing, the subjective element. First, we shall consider the other side of the equation, the object known.

#### CONSIDERATIONS ARISING FROM THE OBJECT KNOWN

Only a few words on Mary in Scripture? Answer: types

Like many today, medievals found words about Mary very few. When dealing with the Mother of God, St. Bonaventure had “...to deal with what must

<sup>285</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 59f.

<sup>286</sup> St. Bonaventure and medievals generally felt that Scripture reading was incomplete without the instruction of the Fathers, in some cases making them equal to – even superior to – some books of Scripture. See below, “Use of the Fathers.”

<sup>287</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 60f.

<sup>288</sup> (Chicago, Franciscan Herald Press, 1971) transl. Z. Hayes.

have been, in the eyes of the pious faithful of his time, an astonishing fact: the discrepancy between the high place of Mary in Christian devotion and her subdued image in the Gospels."<sup>289</sup>

St. Bonaventure responds to this when commenting on Luke's genealogy: "It appears from it that little is mentioned in the Scriptures about Mary. For if there is no mention of her in the genealogy, in keeping with the customs of the Scriptures, where it would seem to be all but necessary, still less should there be anything concerning her own actions."<sup>290</sup>

Bonaventure found information on Our Lady throughout the Old Testament in the study of types, still an acceptable practice in our more skeptical time. Tavard tells us of this:

...Bonaventure attempts to balance the picture, at least in regard to Mary,<sup>291</sup> by pointing out that there are women in the Old Testament from whose story one can learn about Mary. In other words, there exists a legitimate Marian typology, through which Mary is more present in the Scriptures than meets the eye at first sight.<sup>292</sup>

## DIFFERENT SENSES OF SCRIPTURE

### The literal sense

For all his emphasis on spiritual sense and metaphorical meanings, the Seraphic Doctor does define the literal sense of Scripture. In the words of Tavard: "...An analytical enquiry into grammar and meaning, or an historical determination of the natural and human events described."<sup>293</sup>

...The Bonaventurian conception of the literal sense of Scripture is quite at variance with the literal reading done in our own days with the tools of scientific exegesis. Bonaventure tends to take the letter of the text at face-value when it is read uncritically. Indeed, he is aware of variant opinions as to the exact sense of various texts or as to the historical context or the geographical location of some of the biblical events. He takes sides or not, depending in part on the relative importance of the problem and its relevance to the piety of faith, in part on the secondary evidence that can be marshaled out of such traditional lights of biblical

<sup>289</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.73.

<sup>290</sup> Bonaventure, *Comment. In Ev. S. Lucae*, cap. 3, #58, trans. G. Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 72.

<sup>291</sup> Bonaventure explains the omission of women from genealogies by a list of womanly "defects," based on Aristotle, Scripture, or medieval traditions. Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.72, Bonaventure, *Comment. In Ev. S. Lucae*, cap. 3, # 58; VII, 85f.

<sup>292</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 71; "Scriptum tamen in veteri testamento fuit, quod esse poterat figura Virginis in aliquibus mulieribus, quae Mariae et Ecclesiae figuram gesserunt." Bonaventure, *Comment. In Ev. S. Lucae*, cap. 3, # 58; VII, 86. "But things were written in the Old Testament which could be types of the Virgin in some women, who were types of Mary and the Church."

<sup>293</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 110f.

scholarship as St. Jerome and, more recently, the often anonymous authors of the *glossa* (a more or less literal paraphrase and interpretation of Scripture) and Peter Comestor (d. c. 1179), whose *Historia scholastica* was treated as a source-book on information for biblical history.

Finally, at a different level, the liturgical practice of the Church had to be taken into account. Bonaventure assumed that this practice had been, if not formally inspired, at least providentially guided, by the Holy Spirit.<sup>294</sup>

For the Franciscan Doctor, the literal sense of the New Testament is the spiritual sense of the Old. Seeking for spiritual senses of the Gospels, etc., he applies the text to faith, hope, and love. But, in the Old Testament, he searches for anticipations of Christ, finding them in all kinds of associations and similarities between the texts and the realities of the two Covenants.<sup>295</sup>

### The Three Spiritual Senses: Teaching Doctrine, Morals, and End-time

These three spiritual, non-literal senses of Scripture were found in medieval exegesis. The analogical, also referred to as allegorical, taught doctrine. It could be called the flower of faith. The tropological was the moral sense. These two spiritual senses are found most often. The third, the anagogical, is eschatological, referring to "the dimension of eschatology as this can already be experienced in this life by participation and anticipation." The latter two senses might be called the flowers of love and of hope, as the analogical was of faith. All these theological virtues were constantly employed in the Seraphic Doctor's exegesis, leading him well beyond the literal sense.<sup>296</sup>

### Method of Exegesis in Preaching

Father George Tavard describes a related, but different approach to exegesis used by St. Bonaventure in preaching. In feast-day sermons, there was a mixture of realism, stressing the objective reality of the Incarnation, and flights of fancy, extolling the role and the virtues of the saint. Still this praise was not haphazard. It followed certain rules, which Tavard's chapter, "Principles of Marian Preaching," outlines.<sup>297</sup>

The Franciscan Master's exegesis in his sermons is similar to that in his Scripture commentaries. But his preaching explores the spiritual meaning of

<sup>294</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 90,91.

<sup>295</sup> G. Tavard, *Transiency and permanence. The method of theology according to St. Bonaventure*, (Alleggheny, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1954) 43-50; cited, Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 115.

<sup>296</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 90.

<sup>297</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 110 (Chapter: "Principles of Marian Preaching," pp. 109-119).

the Bible more than his scientific scriptural studies, seeking the relation of the inspired text to faith, through allegory, to love, in tropology,<sup>298</sup> and to hope, by anagogy. And often, in preaching, he begins with one of the spiritual senses of the text, without first giving the literal meaning. He would not tolerate this in an academic exercise. But the purpose of exegetical analysis is knowledge; that of preaching is edification. This does not mean his preaching never focuses on the literal or historical sense or that the spiritual meaning is always found at the same level of the spiritual senses.<sup>299</sup>

In the case of the Temple, the Seraphic Doctor says the literal sense is the "material basilica" in Jerusalem, the allegorical is "the virginal womb," the tropological, "the faithful soul," and the anagogical, the "heavenly Jerusalem." Jesus finds his rest variously in all three.<sup>300</sup> The Ark of the Covenant has, as its literal meaning, the tangible ark of wood and gold, the allegorical, Christ and His Church, the tropological, the episcopate and the holy soul, the anagogical, "the heavenly secret and the Jerusalem on high."<sup>301</sup>

#### SCRIPTURE STUDY IN RELATION TO MARY

##### The Allegorical Sense and Its Application to Our Lady

Tavard further says:

She [Mary] is intimately related to the allegorical meaning of Scripture, which is described symbolically in Ezechiel's vision (Ez. 1:6). Scripture has, like the animals of the vision, four faces or senses. In turn, the allegorical sense has four faces. The first is Christological, the second Mariological, the third ecclesial, and the fourth is scriptural, when Scripture refers to itself. Of these four faces the first is of course predominant. It relates to the "humanity assumed, in its nativity and its passion, which are the principal allegories." The second, however, is the Mother of God, Mary, since beautiful things are said of her in Scripture, since in all the Scriptures she is featured in relation to her Son. And what some people say – why are so few things said of the Blessed Virgin? – is nonsense: for many things are said, since there is something about her everywhere, and more is said of her everywhere than if one wrote a treatise. The third is the Church militant, or Mother-Church, which receives many praises in Scripture ....<sup>302</sup>

<sup>298</sup> "The tropological sense is, for Bonaventure, the moral sense. Tavard, *Forthbringer* p. 90. St. Thomas also used this term. *Summa Theologiae*, I, 9.1, a. 10.

<sup>299</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, 114f.

<sup>300</sup> *Sermon on the Purification*, III. BAC 690; cited, Tavard, 116.

<sup>301</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nativitate B.V.M.*, *Sermo* V, Intro.; IX, p. 715; Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 116f.

<sup>302</sup> "In allegorico sensu similiter sunt quatuor facies, scilicet humanitas assumpta quantum ad nativitatem et passionem, quae sunt principales allegoriae. – Secunda est mater Dei Maria, quia mira de ipsa dicuntur in Scripturis, quae in omnibus Scripturis refertur in relatione ad Filium.

## Mystical Scriptural Interpretation regarding the Virgin Mary

In a summary of St. Bonaventure's exegesis of Marian texts, Tavad points out four notable differences between his practice and the use of the Bible in theology "and even the Mariology" of our century.<sup>303</sup> He has a heavy emphasis on typology of three kinds: allegorical or analogical, tropological, and anagogical:

Firstly, Bonaventure makes considerable use of a typological reading of the Old Testament. Many texts, whatever their significance in their immediate and original context, also refer to the story of Jesus as told in the New Testament. And the typology in question is discovered backwards by looking for illustrative material in the books of the old Hebrew tradition, rather than forward, by looking for material of the early Christian tradition that would show the fulfillment of prophecies or promises made or implied under the Old Covenant.

Secondly, the typology of which Bonaventure, ... is so fond, can be of the three kinds which mediaeval exegesis distinguished: analogical (also called allegorical), tropological (or moral). And anagogical. The first two spiritual senses have appeared the most frequently. Yet the anagogical dimension of Scripture is never far from Bonaventure's concerns, since it refers to the dimension of eschatology as this can already be experienced in this life by participation and anticipation. Analogy is, as it were, the flower of faith; tropology is that of love; anagogy that of hope. The three theological virtues are constantly at work in this exegesis. It is therefore not surprising that they should discover in Scripture what a sober objective look at the literal meaning of the biblical texts would not unearth.<sup>304</sup>

Besides the four usual senses, he discovers a fifth, the mystical.<sup>305</sup> In this sense, the Ark is the Virgin Mary. He explains this in light of what the Ark is, what it contains, what it does, and what it receives. From all these aspects, it is related to the Mother of God. Mary is beautiful by her virtue and incorruptible. She is the Ark containing "manna in the suavity of grace, the stick in the virtue of faith, the Law in the correctness of her understanding and she supported the two cherubim in the fullness of her wisdom..."<sup>306</sup> As to doing, Our Lady

Et quod dicunt aliqui: quare ita pauca dicuntur de beata Virgine? nihil est, quia multa dicuntur, quia ubique de ipsa, et plus est dici de ipsa ubique, quam si unus tractatus fieret. – Tertia est Ecclesia militans vel mater Ecclesia, quae miras laudes habet in Scriptura." Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 13, no. 20 (Tavad's endnote: "coll. VII," *Forthbringer*, p. 184, n. 30, is a misprint); Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 182, gives almost a translation of this Latin

<sup>303</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 89.

<sup>304</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 90.

<sup>305</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 117; Bonaventure, *De Nativitate B.V.M.*, *Sermo V*, Intro.; IX, p. 715.

<sup>306</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nativitate B.V.M.*, *Sermo V*, II; IX, p. 716.



leads the perfect, protects the struggling, and reconciles the repentant.<sup>307</sup> And she receives honor and reverence in untiring veneration.<sup>308</sup>

### Exegesis and Our Lady in St. Bonaventure

"...The ubiquity of Mary in Scripture derives from the ubiquity of Christ; where he is, she is. The language of Scripture applies universally to her Son, and, through him, by way of redundancy also to her. Christ is the sun; she is a 'vase receiving the sun, a vase admirable like the sun.'<sup>309</sup>

In a summary of St. Bonaventure's exegesis of Marian texts, Tavad points out four notable differences from the use of the Bible in theology "and even the Mariology" of our century.<sup>310</sup> First, abundant typology, second, typology according to the spiritual senses, especially analogy (or allegory) and tropology; third, an uncritical reading of the literal sense, even ignoring variant opinions if they are irrelevant to the piety of faith, and, last, a concern for the liturgical practice of the Church, which he believed to be, if not inspired, at least providentially guided by the Holy Spirit.<sup>311</sup>

### SOURCES OF INTERPRETATION

#### The Metaphorical Principle

The Seraphic Doctor also relied on what Tavad calls the "metaphorical principle." Beyond the words and sentences of Scripture and their literal meaning, the interpreter must search into their metaphorical sense. The saint tells us: "Because the mystery of the Incarnation of the Lord is so hidden and profound that no intellect can catch it, no tongue explain it, the Holy Spirit, condescending to human infirmity, decided to suggest it with numerous metaphors, guided by which we would come to some awareness of it."<sup>312</sup>

Tavad elaborates:

Rather than an analytical enquiry into grammar and meaning, or an historical determination of the natural and human events described – that is, of what Bonaventure has elsewhere identified as the literal sense of Scripture – the interpreter should, with the help of divine grace, strive for an insight into the spiritual

<sup>307</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nativitate B.V.M., Sermo V, III*, 1,2,& 3; IX, pp. 717f.

<sup>308</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nativitate B.V.M., Sermo V, IV*, 4; IX, p. 719; Tavad, 116-118.

<sup>309</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, pp. 182f; "Unde est vas luminis susceptivum, sicut sol vas admirabile, . . . " Bonaventure, *Collationes in Hexaemeron*, coll. XIII, no. 27; V, p. 392;.

<sup>310</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 89.

<sup>311</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, pp. 90,91.

<sup>312</sup> Bonaventure, *Homilies on the Annunciation*, 1, Intro; IX, p. 657 (Tavad's endnote: "p. 708"); in Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 110.

dimensions of the images and comparisons which abound in Scripture. The principle is extended to the Virgin Mary, since she herself pertains to the mystery of the Incarnation.<sup>313</sup>

Should, then, the exegete "strive for an insight into the spiritual dimensions of the images and comparisons which abound in Scripture?" The members of the Jesus Seminar might find this unpalatable. Even a faith-professing, Modernism-rejecting Catholic scholar most loyal to Catholic tradition might wince. Current academic practice is rooted, very laudably, in more arid soil and produces drier, less sugary fruits. But honest Bonaventure admits, nay proclaims, what he is doing. He would deceive no one. And almost everyone else in his day was doing the same thing. Today, we are more Thomistic, sometimes Bultmannian.<sup>314</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor believes in a literal sense of Scripture, found through an analysis of grammar and meaning and a historical determination of the event recounted. But the interpreter's main purpose must be to gain, by the help of God's grace, an understanding of the images and comparisons which fill the Bible.<sup>315</sup>

Although he applies this metaphorical principle directly to the Incarnation of the Lord, Bonaventure intends it to apply to Mary as well, since she is part of that mystery and belongs to the Incarnation. In regard to her, too, the principle justifies a metaphorical reading of the texts.<sup>316</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor's sermons on Mary are formed according to this "metaphorical principle." And, in the case of the Blessed Virgin, the Seraphic Doctor attributes the multiplicity of metaphors directly to the Holy Spirit. No one figure of speech, no "parabolical similitude," suffices to describe her. Many are needed:

<sup>313</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 110f.

<sup>314</sup> Repeatedly, I want to defend St. Bonaventure and explain him to today's readers. He is often different from contemporary theologians. Wrong, in terms of their practice. Palliative parallels are found, not in academic methods, but in the lived experience of the devout. The priestly exegete who takes a parish help-out turns into a Bonaventure on Saturday afternoon and preaches with emotional unction, then resumes his scientific *persona* on Monday morning. Bonaventurian practice is by no means unknown among us. St. Thomas took a step forward, dividing scientific theology from prayer life. The Franciscan represents a slightly simpler stage, which must be understood in its own terms, not condemned in light of later developments. Iroquois warriors of the sixteenth century were not enlisted in the Iroquois Army. Paddling canoes, they did not turn into the Iroquois Navy, nor, when they rushed ashore, did they become the Iroquois Marine Corps. These perfectly valid distinctions came later and do not help us understand them.

<sup>315</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, 110f.

<sup>316</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, 111.

Such is the excellence of the glorious Virgin that all tongues, Scriptures, prophecies, and parabolical similitudes fall short of the proper narrative and praise of her. Whence the Holy Spirit, through the prophets' mouths, commends her not only with words but also with images and parabolical similitudes; and since no parabolical similitude perfectly suffices to express her excellence, therefore manifold similitudes and metaphors are introduced into her praise ...Among all the metaphorical similitudes the most excellent seems to be the metaphorical similitude taken from the sun. For the solar body is the most excellent of all the material bodies, and because of its excellence it designates, above all, Jesus Christ. Since, however, what belongs to the head is referred to the head and members, and the most excellent of the members of Christ is the blessed Virgin, it is proper enough to compare her to the sun.<sup>317</sup>

The method used here is, according to Tavard, both Christotypical and ecclesiotypical. The Christotypical takes images which fit Christ primarily and applies them secondarily to Our Lady as the first and best member of his body. The ecclesiotypical procedure uses attributes generally true of the Church and affirms them of Mary as more particularly and more excellently true. But the drawing out of these further meanings can be done only through the Holy Spirit, by those who read in the Spirit. "In other words, there can be no strict rule of spiritual exegesis. The remedy to all defective readings and interpretations is reliance, not on oneself, but on the Holy Spirit."<sup>318</sup>

God's intention to speak, in Scripture, of both Christ and Mary in metaphors and parables, justifies the metaphorical method in interpreting the Scriptures. There are two opposed dangers. Some may deny the correct application of these figures. For example, St. Bonaventure says the Purification of Mary is explained by words of Malachi [3:3]<sup>319</sup>. But, "If they are superficially considered, there is no connection of the word with the feast, and the assumed prophecy seems to be absurd."<sup>320</sup> And, "On the other hand, a sort of inflation on the interpreter's part is possible, ...as though a multiplicity of metaphors were able to compensate for the weakness of each of them."<sup>321</sup>

<sup>317</sup> *Sermon on the Nativity of Mary*, II, BAC IV, 911-912. Cited, Tavard, *Forthbringer*, 112.

<sup>318</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 112f.

<sup>319</sup> The words of Malachi [3:3] to which Bonaventure refers are these "Purgabit filios Levi et colabit eos quasi aurum et quasi argentum et erunt Domino offerentes sacrificia in iustitia." Bonaventure, *Sermo I de Purificatione B.V.M.*, Prothema; IX, p. 633; "He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and then they will make the offering to Yahweh as it should be made (Jerusalem Bible)."

<sup>320</sup> Bonaventure, *Sermo de Purif. B.V.M.*, 1, Intro.; IX, p. 633; in Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 111.

<sup>321</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 111.

## Symbolism: The Meaning of History and of Scripture

St. Augustine's concept of history, passed on to the Middle Ages, was of a passage of individual happenings, leaving aside any common, any general aspect. But science, for the medievals, was, precisely the knowledge of the universal. Thus, "science of history" is an oxymoron. History gives us only the purely external reality, never an inner intelligibility. Everything historical can only be "believed," not "understood".<sup>322</sup> This unhistorical way of thinking was in conflict with the prophetic interpretation which Christians give to Old Testament histories, penetrating the context of historical events like a light and clarifying their inner meaning. This prophetic interpretation influenced Augustine's and the medievals' evaluation of history but could not overturn the fundamental rejection of the intelligibility of the historical. History lay outside the intelligible and, hence, outside of theology. Thus we read in the *Hexaemeron*, "Note, too, that some things are credible, but not intelligible by reason, such as particular facts, like 'Abraham begot Isaac;' some credible things are, however, intelligible and, when they are understood, have solid reasons."<sup>323</sup>

In the *Hexaemeron* the concept history is dominated by the symbolic mode of thought more than by the ahistorical, rationalistic view of the Scholastics. "The unique individuality of this work [*Hexaemeron*] can be seen in the fact that it is the only work in which a leading Scholastic theologian takes a position relative to that stream of thought characterized by Dempf as "Germanic symbolism."<sup>324</sup>

"Symbolism" here has a specific meaning: spiritual or religious rather than scientific or metaphysical.

The concept "deutscher Symbolismus" has been coined by Dempf in: *Sacrum imperium*, Ch. 6, p. 229f. See esp. p. 231: "As an exegesis of Scripture and the world in accordance with the categories of cause and finality, Scholasticism is a scientific metaphysics that arises from indirectly religious motives. What we call symbolic (Symbolik) is an immediate spiritual-religious attitude; it becomes symbolism (Symbolismus) when the intention to penetrate to the one and only meaning of the world enters into the picture so that one interprets the world exclusively in a symbolic manner."<sup>325</sup>

Two important tendencies are clear. First, the inclination of the early Scholastics to look backward and to canonize or perpetuate the symbolism of the

<sup>322</sup> St. Augustine, *Lib. de div. qu.* 83, q. 48 PL 40, 31.

<sup>323</sup> Ratzinger, p.76.

<sup>324</sup> Ratzinger, pp. 3, 4.

<sup>325</sup> Ratzinger, n. 17, Ch I, p. 169.

Fathers. But, second, there is the tendency of Abbot Joachim to look to the future.<sup>326</sup>

### Church Approval of St. Francis and the Mendicant Orders

The life of St. Francis had created a new exegetical situation. He had dared to live directly by the Gospel, *sine glossa*, "in an immediate encounter with the Lord Who speaks to us in the sacred writings".<sup>327</sup> In the words of his Testament, "...There was no one to tell me what I should do; but the Most High himself made it clear to me that I must live the life of the Gospel."<sup>328</sup> As Ratzinger puts it, "All tradition is of no avail against the immediate word of the Lord."<sup>329</sup> This direct appeal to the letter of the Bible had to be defended to contemporary theologians and it involved at least the beginnings of a new understanding of tradition. The debate on poverty was a working out of the true meaning of Scripture and tradition. The mendicants pointed to the "apostolic life," lived by Francis. But to prove, against attacks, that this truly was the *vita apostolica*, they appealed to the Church and to the Holy See which had canonized both him and St. Dominic and approved both rules. To attack the Franciscan way of life was, therefore, to declare the universal Church guilty of error. Thus, the Church of that day, the "holy people of God," was placed on a level with the Fathers of the Church, "a new criterion of interpretation with equal rights."<sup>330</sup>

This reliance on Church approval of St. Francis falls under objective criteria. Later, the practice of the friars was seen by Bonaventure as exemplifying revelation and wisdom, the subjective insight into the inner meaning of Scripture and the created world.

### Summary of the Objective Elements in Bonaventure's Use of Scripture

Tavard tells us above, "The Bonaventurian conception of the literal sense of Scripture is quite at variance with the literal reading done in our own days with the tools of scientific exegesis."<sup>331</sup> Therefore, many will consider it *wrong*. Modern university usage constitutes truth, at least for many.

Could we say, "different?" Not that we ought to adopt his methods but, possibly, we might see their direct appropriateness to his own time and cir-

<sup>326</sup> Ratzinger, p. 77.

<sup>327</sup> Ratzinger, p. 80.

<sup>328</sup> *St. Francis of Assisi: writings and early biographies; English Omnibus of the sources for the life of St. Francis*, ed. M. Habig (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973) p. 68.

<sup>329</sup> Ratzinger, p.81.

<sup>330</sup> Ratzinger, p.82.

<sup>331</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 90.

cumstances and a certain indirect helpfulness even in our own. He considers a problem's "relevance to the piety of faith."<sup>332</sup> The Bible was written *by* pious faithful *for* pious faithful. To exclude the piety of faith is to distort it.

Again, Tavard says Bonaventure believed the liturgical practice of the Church had to be taken into account. The books of the Bible were written to be read in the worshipping assembly. That is its natural "habitat." It can, of course, like a living animal, be removed thence and dissected. But this is violence, destroying its life and its essence. Such methods may instruct but they also distort.

It is the practice of the university to ridicule divergencies. And Bonaventure does diverge. His academic practice seems today more like the parish preacher than the scientific exegete. But his way has a purpose. He states his rules and then observes them. It is worthy of our respect, even if not of our imitation. We shall find more of his methods in his use of the Fathers.

#### SUBJECTIVE ELEMENTS

These subjective aspects are more important to Bonaventure than the objective, both before and after reading the letter of Scripture.

Subjectively, the persons knowing need holiness and "revelation," (illumination) *prior* to the reading of Scripture, in order to attain further "revelation" (deeper understanding) through such reading.<sup>333</sup>

Predecessor of Bonaventure on "inner revelation": Rupert of Deutz

Ratzinger repeats the text of Rupert of Deutz, distinguishing these three kinds of vision, which the Seraphic Doctor followed:

The *visio corporalis* – *corpus*. This refers to the bodily act of seeing.

The *visio spiritualis* – *spiritus*. This is the internal imagination or dreaming.

The saint points out that Pharoah had a dream but did not understand it.

The *visio intellectualis* – *Mens Dei spiritu illuminata*. He refers to Joseph, who understood the dream through divine illumination.

Rupert says mystical union is needed to read Scripture, just as to write it. "Revelation," (illumination), identical with Biblical inspiration is needed, as much to understand Scripture, as to write it. Rupert sees revelation, according to Ratzinger, only in the *third* kind of vision. This third vision, for him, as for St. Augustine, is the same as the third heaven to which St. Paul was caught

<sup>332</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 91.

<sup>333</sup> Since St. Bonaventure uses the word "revelation" in such a different sense from most Catholics today, I shall enclose it in quotation marks when it is used in a Bonaventurian sense and often add explanatory parentheses.

up. This was not a privilege unique to Paul for it is *identical with the process of inspiration*, common to all the inspired *authors* of the Biblical books. Since the Holy Word was *born of mystical union* with God, *only thus* can it be *understood*. To read it with the corporal or even spiritual vision is to misunderstand. *St. Bonaventure* has the *same* formal structure as *St. Augustine* and *Rupert*, the same distinction of the three kinds of vision.<sup>334</sup> And, like *Rupert*, the Seraphic Doctor sees “revelation”(divine illumination), as necessary to *understand* the Scriptures and as very *similar* to the divine inspiration of the human *authors* of Scripture.

“Revelation” (deeper understanding) for the Seraphic Doctor, is not the same as Scripture; it goes beyond the objective letter. For the Seraphic Doctor, “revelation” is *not* the written words of the Bible but the *understanding* of them. The process of “revelation” is the coming to grasp the spiritual sense. It includes a *passing* from the sensible world to the *intelligible* world. This is the unveiling, the “re-vealing” of “revelation”(deeper understanding).<sup>335</sup> The Scriptural author cannot give us his intellectual vision in its naked spirituality but must dress it in the “swaddling clothes” of human words. “Revelation” is *available* through the Scriptural text but is hidden and needs to be uncovered.<sup>336</sup>

“Revelation” is understood very differently by Bonaventure from twentieth-century Catholics. Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, says: “Jesus Christ . . . completed and perfected Revelation . . . by the total fact of his presence and self-manifestation – by words and works, signs and miracles, but above all by his death and glorious resurrection from the dead, and finally by sending the Spirit of truth.”<sup>337</sup>

All these are objective and, to a great extent, even *sensible* events. Through these objective acts, Jesus perfected Revelation. What about the inward, subjective understanding of this Revelation? A few words later, the *Dogmatic Constitution* continues: “The . . . Holy Spirit constantly perfects faith by his gifts, so that Revelation may be more and more profoundly understood.”<sup>338</sup> *Dei Verbum* clearly distinguishes objective revelation from the subjective understanding of it.

<sup>334</sup> Ratzinger, p. 65.

<sup>335</sup> Ratzinger, p. 66.

<sup>336</sup> Ratzinger, p. 68.

<sup>337</sup> Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on Revelation (Dei Verbum)*, October 18, 1965, n. 4; *Vatican Council II: The conciliar and postconciliar documents*, A. Flannery, ed. (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press) pp. 751f.

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 5, p. 752.

The First Vatican Council appears to have a similar, perhaps "objectivist" concept of revelation. It speaks of "... divine mysteries . . . delivered by revelation . . . and received by faith."<sup>339</sup> Hervé, one of the despised but very serviceable theology manuals, defines revelation in the active sense as "the manifestation, supernaturally done, by God to us of some truth, through speaking."<sup>340</sup> Revelation, taken passively or objectively, he says is, "the ensemble ('complexus') of truths which God has supernaturally manifested to us."<sup>341</sup>

Allegedly, postconciliar American catechists had a liking for "on-going revelation" in a somewhat Bonaventurian sense but the official national catechetical directory for the United States, *Sharing the Light of Faith* restricts "revelation" to the "divine public revelation which closed at the end of the Apostolic Age," using the terms "manifestation" and "communication" for the "other modes by which God continues to make Himself known . . ."<sup>342</sup> The *General Catechetical Directory* from the Vatican makes a parallel distinction between divine *revelation* and, on the other hand, the grace and secret direction of the Holy Spirit.<sup>343</sup>

#### The Revelation (Objective) in the Apostolic Age Has a Definitive Character

There are stages of faith. These are also stages of mysticism and of "revelation." St. Bonaventure hopes for a new revelation, even though the New Testament has, at least something of a definitive character. But if, at some future time, that mystical penetration were guaranteed to all, that would be indeed a time of a new "revelation" (deeper, now *universal* understanding).<sup>344</sup>

"Revelation" Is Passing from Letter to Spirit, from the Outer to the Inner, from the Objective to the Personal

In general, the Seraphic Doctor means, by "revelation," the "unveiling of the hidden," whether of the future, the mystical meaning of Scripture, or the imageless union with God through the mystical ascent.

<sup>339</sup> First Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith*, Chapter IV, "Faith and Reason," n. 43 (Denz. 3016); in *The Teaching of the Catholic Church*, ed. K. Rahner (Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1967), p. 36.

<sup>340</sup> J. Hervé, *Manuale Theologiae Dogmaticae*, (Paris: Berche and Pagis, 1949), Vol. I, n. 55, p. 45.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>342</sup> *Sharing the Light of Faith: National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference, Department of Education, 1979), n. 50, p. 28.

<sup>343</sup> Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, *General Catechetical Directory*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference: 1971), n. 13, pp. 15f.

<sup>344</sup> Ratzinger, p. 68.



In Scripture, St. Bonaventure was looking for "revelation." He did not think about "revelation" the way more recent theologians have, for instance in manualist tracts on revelation, like Hervé, above. Ratzinger concludes to this from the exposition *On the Sentences*, the *Quaestiones disputatae*, Bible commentaries, and Franciscan works. He says the Franciscan Master deals with "revelations" (in the plural), rather than with Revelation, in the public sense, more with individual "revelations" rather than the *one* Revelation which stands behind and 'has taken place in these many revelations.'<sup>345</sup> (Personal, secret, inner "revelations") Bonaventure has clear and detailed analyses, always of acts of "revelation," of God's turning to the human recipient in individual cases.<sup>346</sup> His use of "revelation," or of "inspiration," "manifestation," or "opening," is not the same as that of our day. That reservation must be kept in mind in reading what follows.<sup>347</sup>

He understands the process of "revelation" as the act of penetrating through outside appearances to the spiritual center. This process is ultimately a mystical one, though in borderline cases, sinners may receive and transmit revelation. Even here, "revelation" is the penetrating of outside appearances to the inner spiritual reality, a deeper intellectual vision, a penetration through the objective to the subjective understanding.<sup>348</sup>

We learn the teaching of the Faith through allegory, rather than through the letter of the Sacred Text. He compares the letter of Scripture to the water and the spiritual understanding of it to the wine into which it must be transformed and the bread into which the stone is transformed. The mere letter is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Through spiritual understanding, it turns into the Tree of Life. The act of understanding is given by God. It is *this* that is "revelation," not the letter in itself. P. Dempsey shows the Franciscan Master makes no distinction between "revelation" and inspiration. Medieval theology in general accepted Cassiodorus' definition of prophecy as "inspiration or revelation." Bonaventure brings all three concepts, prophecy, inspiration, and "revelation," close together.<sup>349</sup>

"Revelation" Gives Wisdom of Various Kinds, a Subjective Deepening of the Person

St. Bonaventure speaks of the different kinds of wisdom in the second *Colatio in Hexaemeron*.

<sup>345</sup> Ratzinger, p. 57.

<sup>346</sup> Ratzinger, p. 57.

<sup>347</sup> Ratzinger, p. 57.

<sup>348</sup> Ratzinger, p. 66.

<sup>349</sup> Ratzinger, p. 64.

That beauty (of Wisdom) is wondrous, for at times it is uniform and at others manifold; at times it assumes every form and at others none. Light clothes itself in four different ways. For it is seen as uniform in the rules of Divine Law, as manifold in the mysteries of divine Scriptures, as assuming every form in the traces of the divine works, and as without any form in the elevations of divine raptures.<sup>350</sup>

Ratzinger goes on to a deeper explanation of the wisdoms arising from “revelation:” the multiform, the omniform, and the nulliform. (N.B. The “uniform” wisdom, knowledge of basic principles, is not included by Ratzinger as arising from “revelation.” It is necessarily present in everyone. Does this mean it needs no special “revealing” act of God? Ratzinger implies this by omitting it here. But the saint attributes it directly to God and refuses to credit it to any creature. Possible relations to God are developed below.)

#### Uniform Wisdom: All Have It; It Is the Basis for All Judgments

The uniform wisdom is the grasp of the basic principles, the eternal rules of all knowledge. These are the principles by which one judges about everything else.

...She [wisdom, L. Gl.] appears unchanging in the rules of Divine Law that bind us. These rules filling the rational mind with splendid light are all the ways by which the mind knows and judges that which could not be otherwise, the fact that the supreme Principle must be supremely venerated, that the supreme Truth must be supremely believed and assented to, and that the supreme Good must be supremely desired and loved.

These rules are beyond error, doubt, and judgment is by them and not of them. Hence such wisdom is clear. They are also beyond change, restriction, and cancellation; hence such wisdom never wastes away. For these rules are so certain that they cannot be contradicted in any way, except as regards exterior reason,...<sup>351</sup>

These truths are known to all, though not always explicitly. When the ordinary citizen hears from television that Anacin is better than aspirin, that Excedrin is better than Anacin and that Bayer brand aspirin is better than all of them, he or she does not say, “The same thing under the same aspect cannot, at the same time, both be and not be.” He or she says something like “Nonsense!” But the Principle of Non-Contradiction has been grasped – and expressed! – implicitly. St. Bonaventure’s examples, that the supreme Truth must be supremely believed and the supreme Good must be supremely desired, are as clearly to be accepted as the aspirin commercials are to be rejected. And everyone knows it.

<sup>350</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaameron*, Col. 2, n. 8; *Works*, transl. de Vrink, p. 26.

<sup>351</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaameron*, Coll. 2, nos. 9 & 10; *Works*, transl. de Vrink, pp. 26f.

These truths are simply *given* and can be denied only as regards exterior reason.<sup>352</sup> You can *say*, orally, externally, you do not believe them. But, internally, you still believe them.<sup>353</sup> This wisdom comes from God and leads back to him, although he is not directly grasped in its insights. This uniform wisdom pertains to merely rational judgments – or the bases for judgments.<sup>354</sup> Does it require (in contemporary terminology) *supernatural* revelation? The Seraphic Doctor says of the rules in which this *sapientia uniformis* appears:

...They are rooted in Eternal Light and lead to it, '.... Nor should it be said that they are founded on any created light, as for instance in a certain Intelligence that enlightens the minds. For since these rules are unrestricted in that they offer themselves to the minds of all, it would follow that a created light could be unrestricted and would be pure act, which is impossible.'<sup>355</sup>

The *sapientia uniformis*, then, is founded directly upon God, in some way, though perhaps not on a particular act of "revelation." Maybe a contuition of God.<sup>356</sup>

### Multiform Wisdom

St. Bonaventure says, "...Wisdom appears as manifold in the mysteries of divine Scriptures." He quotes Ephesians, "...through the church the manifold wisdom (multiformis sapientia) of God might now be made known."<sup>357</sup>

The saint attributes to the multiform wisdom the understanding of the spiritual senses of Scripture, "There shines forth a threefold signification in

<sup>352</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaameron* loc. cit., p. 27.

<sup>353</sup> An eerie foreshadowing of post-Cartesian epistemology, clashing with the idyll of the Middle Ages as innocently dogmatic and of Bonaventure as the most innocently dogmatic of all.

<sup>354</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaameron*, Coll. VII, #1, *Works*, transl. de Vrink, p. 109; Ratzinger, p. 60.

<sup>355</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaameron*, Coll. 2, n. 10; *Works*, transl. de Vrink, p. 27.

<sup>356</sup> According to St Augustine: "... There is something eternal and immutable in the first principles, as in the laws of numbers and in the wisdom according to which we live, for we gather many luminous insights from them. *Consequently it is the immutable Truth of God which we attain in them*, . . . [emphasis added, L. Gl.] F.-J. Thonnard, *A short history of philosophy* (Paris: Desclée, 1956) p. 223; (Thonnard is an Augustinian of the Assumption and respected on St. Augustine). Cf. "[Memory] . . . holds the rational principles and axioms as everlasting things held everlastingly. For memory, when cooperating with reason, could never lose hold on these so completely that, on hearing them, it would fail to approve and agree; . . . This is clearly shown when we say to someone: 'A proposition is either affirmative or negative,' or the whole is larger than its parts, or any other axiom which cannot be contradicted by our innermost reason. . . . It appears that the memory holds, present in itself, an unchangeable light, in which it recognizes the immutable truths. . . . and has God so truly present in itself, that the soul actually grasps Him, . . ." Bonaventure, *The journey of the mind to God*, Chap. 3, no. 2; *The works of Bonaventure* (Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1960), Vol. I *Mystical opuscula*, p. 29, transl. de Vrink.

<sup>357</sup> 3:10; RSV.

Scriptures, teaching what to believe, what to expect, and what to do." And he shows how the manifold wisdom teaches us the allegorical, anagogical, and tropological senses.<sup>358</sup>

Ratzinger tells us: The "sapientia multiformis" is extremely important in Bonaventure's theology. It amounts to the grasping of the triple spiritual sense of Holy Writ, the allegorical, the anagogical, and the tropological.<sup>359</sup> The "sapientia multiformis" is conceived in opposition to the uniform wisdom and is greatly superior to it. This manifold wisdom confers an understanding of the mysteries of the Bible, covered ("velata") to the proud, opened ("revelata") to the humble and poor. It gives us the unveiled face of Second Corinthians: "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit (3:18; RSV)." Therefore, "sapientia multiformis" comes from God's revelation.<sup>360</sup>

### Omniform Wisdom

It is on the natural level, like the uniform; but it comes from a "revelation." It is elaborated, developed, not the rock-bottom undeniable basis of everything else.

A characteristic teaching of the Saint is that nature itself reveals God to us. In this, he follows his Father, St. Francis. Scripture and creation present two parallel "revelations," each *hidden* behind the veil of a *letter*. It is the Holy Spirit in both cases who *penetrates* the letter to the inner meaning, in a living motion. The "letter" of either can entrap us.

The "revealing" of the inner meaning of the material world is given us through "omniform wisdom," third of the four wisdoms to be discussed:

The third, omniform, wisdom, also comes from revelation [inner illumination L. Gl.]. St. Paul tells the Romans God shows, i.e. reveals, evidence of himself, "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them."<sup>361</sup> This wisdom discovers the footprints or even the image of God the Creator in his creatures. Solomon typifies this wisdom, as do the philosophers. But these run the risk of staying with the creatures and not discovering their source through the clues he has left. Their wisdom then becomes folly.<sup>362</sup>

The omniform wisdom interprets the letter of creation for us, showing us the Creator's glory. This wisdom comes from "revelation," according to the

<sup>358</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaemeron*, nos. 13-17, pp. 28-30.

<sup>359</sup> Ratzinger, p. 64.

<sup>360</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaemeron*, XIX 9, p. 421b; XVI 23, p. 407a; Ratzinger, p. 61.

<sup>361</sup> 1:19; RSV.

<sup>362</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaemeron*. II, 19, p. 339; Ratzinger, p. 61, cf. n. 9.

Saint, and it comes about through the understanding of a “letter.” Scripture has its letter and created things have a “letter,” an exterior. Here, too, we can stay with the letter and miss the true meaning, the sign-value of the creature. Especially in our time in salvation history – after the Fall – the language of the created universe has become unknown to us.

The *Itinerarium* builds a ladder from the creatures of this world to their Creator<sup>363</sup> “...He who does not discover the First Principle from all these signs is a fool.... Honor your God in all creatures.... For therefore the world will rise up to struggle with those who do not understand.”<sup>364</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor speaks of the *sapientia omniformis* in the second lecture on the *Hexaemeron*. He places it between the *sapientia multiformis* and the *sapientia nulliformis*, two basic forms of God’s revelation. These “wisdoms” will be discussed below.

In his exposition *On the Sentences*, St. Bonaventure had already stated that, in the present time, we have lost our contemplative powers and only through the healing power of grace can we decipher the book of creation. The Bonaventurian symbolism of creation is best expressed in his *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* and is described in Gilson’s book:

*Augustinus autem Platonem secutus quantum fides catholica patiebatur*, wrote St. Thomas. St. Bonaventure in his turn follows St. Augustine and leads us to a universe of transparent symbols unsurpassed and unsurpassable in the luxuriance of its imagery. *Thomas autem Aristotelem secutus quantum fides catholica patiebatur*, we might write in reply; and that is why Thomist analogy leads us to a universe of forms and substances, in which each being fixedly partakes of its being and is its being essentially before it represents a being which it is not. Here is a profound philosophical difference, and the difference in aspect which the two systems present is only the external sign, true though it is. Thomist analogy determines the severe and unadorned architecture of distinct essences systematized hierarchically in the *Summa contra Gentiles*; Bonaventurian analogy casts across the apparent heterogeneity of things the bonds of conceptual and numerical proportions, tenuous but ramified without limit, and the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* is the rich harvest of symbols that it bears.<sup>365</sup>

### Nulliform Wisdom

The fourth kind of wisdom makes a break with the previous increases in “forms,” from “uniform” through “multiform” to “omniform.” Now suddenly

<sup>363</sup> Ratzinger. p. 86.

<sup>364</sup> Bonaventure, *Itinerarium*, c. 2, 15; V, p.299.

<sup>365</sup> Gilson, E., *La philosophie de saint Bonaventure* (Paris: Vrin, 1924); *The philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, transl. I. Trethowan and Frank Sheed (Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1965), p. 214.

there comes the "sapientia nulliformis." We approach in silence the hiddenness of God. Here, the intellect gives no light. This highest wisdom is most of all the free gift and "revelation" (here, a darkness, a non-understanding) of the Lord. This Paul taught only to the perfect, for example, Timothy and Dionysius.<sup>366</sup>

St. Bonaventure holds the manifold wisdom, the allegorical interpretation of the biblical letter, gives way to the nulliform, or formless wisdom, the mystical experience of God. The "revelation" of the last age must take this form of wisdom, the mysticism taught by Dionysius the Areopagite.<sup>367</sup>

### Final "Revelation" at End of World

There are stages of faith. These are also stages of mysticism and of "revelation." St. Bonaventure hopes for a new "revelation," even though the New Testament has a definitive character. But if, at some future time, that mystical penetration were guaranteed to all, that would be indeed a time of a new "revelation".<sup>368</sup>

"Bonaventure believed there was a gradual, historical, progressive development in the understanding of Scripture which was in no way closed," Ratzinger says, in relation to the multiform wisdom,<sup>369</sup> and goes on to propose the precise question: "How did Bonaventure present the relation between Scripture and history?"

Bonaventure applied the doctrine of *rationes seminales* to the interpretation of Scripture. Ratzinger puts it: "Scripture is full of hidden seeds which are developed only in the course of history and therefore constantly allow new insights which would not have been possible for an earlier age."<sup>370</sup> The cardinal further says the relation between Scripture and history can be expressed in two principles: first, that Scripture has grown historically and must be understood historically; second, it is not just a product of past history but also a prediction of the future. While some of the future has become past, part of it remains to come. The whole meaning of Scripture is not yet known to us. A time of complete understanding, of final "revelation" is still to come.<sup>371</sup>

<sup>366</sup> Ratzinger, p. 61.

<sup>367</sup> Ratzinger, p. 87.

<sup>368</sup> Ratzinger, p. 68.

<sup>369</sup> Ratzinger, p. 75.

<sup>370</sup> Ratzinger, p. 55.

<sup>371</sup> Ratzinger, p. 83f.

### “Revelation” in the Mendicant Friars

He held the hoped-for “revelation” was already realized in the two orders of Franciscans and Dominicans.<sup>372</sup> They were not only possessors of scientific knowledge but also a divine sign of the final age. The “revelation” of the final age goes beyond the multiform wisdom, toward the nulliform. Pseudo-Dionysius and St. Francis anticipate the new state of “revelation”.<sup>373</sup> The dynamic of Bonaventure’s theology of history arises from the separation of these two “revelations,” of multiform and nulliform wisdom, and from their future unification.<sup>374</sup> A special historico-theological tension arises from this separation and expectation of re-unification.<sup>375</sup>

The saint experienced a profound inadequacy in all academic learning, especially as he approached the close of his life. He was looking forward to a different, purer revelation [inner illumination. L. Gl.] which could come about only in the last days of this world. St. Francis anticipates this new revelation [inner illumination. L. Gl.], going beyond discursive thinking to a simpler insight, hidden from the wise and clever, but revealed to little ones. These words from Matthew<sup>376</sup> are not prominent in Bonaventure’s commentaries on Scripture but they are emphasized in his interpretations of St. Francis, in whom they are fulfilled in an outstanding way. Francis’ disciple sees a necessary relationship between humility and revelation. One without humility can receive no knowledge of revelation. The degrees of the understanding of revelation are the degrees of humility. The last age, when the littleness of St. Francis will be the common norm, will be the age of the new and fuller revelation, differing from the grasp of revelation already enjoyed by the Franciscan and Dominican friars in that it will not be academic or discursive, but a simple, inner acquaintance with inner meaning of God’s word.<sup>377</sup>

### BONAVENTURE’S USE OF THE FATHERS

They promote subjective growth (“revelation”); they also provide needed objectivity to St. Bonaventure’s subjective approach.

#### Objectivity from Fathers

The mystical penetration which St. Bonaventure exalted, implied a lower value to the letter and, consequently, a lower place for the literal sense of the Bible. But this in no way means that the objective truth of revelation was

<sup>372</sup> Ratzinger, p. 70.

<sup>373</sup> Ratzinger, p. 70.

<sup>374</sup> Ratzinger, p. 62.

<sup>375</sup> Ratzinger, p. 62.

<sup>376</sup> 11:25.

<sup>377</sup> Ratzinger, p. 71.

discarded for a purely subjective approach. "Revelation," the inner meaning of the Scriptures, is found in the teaching of the Fathers and in theology. Its basic outline is the Creed, itself a principle of exegesis. Theology is the understanding of Scripture, the "revelation" of hidden things. Ratzinger says, for Bonaventure, "Only Scripture as it is understood in faith is truly *holy* Scripture".<sup>378</sup> This is not the faith merely of the individual believer but the corporate understanding of the Church. Only by faith does the individual gain admission into the living awareness of the whole Church.<sup>379</sup>

For the Seraphic Doctor, Scripture is understood only spiritually. But this by no means implies an individual or subjective interpretation. "By himself, man cannot come to this understanding. He can do this only through those to whom God revealed it, i.e. through the writings of the Saints such as Augustine, Jerome, and others."<sup>380</sup> In Bonaventurian doctrine then, the spiritual understanding is not simply an individual reader's looking at the biblical passage and, by his personal insight, penetrating beyond the letter to its spiritual meaning. The Franciscan Master is speaking of something fixed, firm, and public. The spiritual meaning of Scripture was revealed to the Fathers and in their writings are found both its rules and even its content. Here we have a concept of revelation (here, not subjective) as an unchangeable, objective reality found in the patristic exegesis.<sup>381</sup>

### Subjectivity through Fathers

In his view of patristic "revelation," St. Bonaventure follows Hugh of St. Victor, for whom, as Grabmann says, Scripture and the Fathers *flow together* into one great "*Scriptura Sacra*"<sup>382</sup>, and Robert of Melun, who exemplifies this basic orientation even more clearly. Robert lists four kinds of writings which have *auctoritas*:

Those which have *auctoritas* by reason of their writers, such as prophets and apostles.

Those which have it through the *acceptio* of posterity, such as *Job*.

Heretical writings which have, nonetheless, acquired some *auctoritas* through later acceptance, like the works of Origen. (Robert is harsh on Origen. We can distinguish, honoring his principle while sparing his target.)

<sup>378</sup> Ratzinger, p. 67.

<sup>379</sup> Ratzinger, p. 68.

<sup>380</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexameron*, XIX; X., p 421; Ratzinger p. 77f.

<sup>381</sup> Ratzinger, p.78.

<sup>382</sup> M. Grabmann, *Die Geschichte der scholastischen Methode*, 2 vol. (Freiburg, 1909-1911 & Darmstadt, 1956) II, p. 210.



Those writings which have *auctoritas* primarily from *acceptio* but, secondarily, because of the writer, like Augustine or Jerome.

This shows there is, as yet, no clear boundary between Scripture and the Fathers. Scripture is inextricably bound up with the Fathers, who are revered equally with many books of the Bible. Shortly before, in 1086, Aimeric of Angoulême, in his *Ars lectoria*, placed together on the second level of *auctoritas*, the "silver" degree, "the Book of Daniel, the Wisdom of Solomon, the two books of the Maccabees, the Epistle to the Hebrews; the Letters of Cyprian, the writings of Ambrose, Jerome, Hilary, Augustine, Gregory; the Canons of the four major Councils."<sup>383</sup> There was no firm boundary between the Books of Scripture and the writings of the Fathers.

Tradition threatened Scripture. Salutory reverence for the writings of the Fathers raised questions about the unique position and supreme value of the Holy Bible. The problem of the canon, solved in antiquity, was now reopened, with profound implications for the Catholic concept of Tradition.<sup>384</sup> Consider these impressive, if not even disturbing, words of Cardinal Ratzinger:

...Because of their great respect for the Fathers, the men of the Middle Ages were confronted anew with the problem of the Canon which had been basically determined already in Christian antiquity. This new determination of the Canon which acquired decisive significance for the formation of the Catholic concept of tradition is a fact that has received little attention up to the present.<sup>385</sup>

By the time Bonaventure lectured on the *Hexameron*, the distinction had been made and the Canon was for him essentially what it is today, though slightly more extensive than our Tridentine canon.<sup>386</sup>

<sup>383</sup> Ratzinger. p.79.

<sup>384</sup> Ratzinger, p.79.

<sup>385</sup> Ratzinger, p.79.

<sup>386</sup> Ratzinger, 80 & 79, n.8. Cf. *Breviloquium*, prol., no. 1; V, 202, and P. Dempsey, *De principiis exegeticis S. Bonaventurae*, Rome, 1945. St. Thomas, like St. Bonaventure, and unlike many of his predecessors, clearly distinguished Holy Scripture from the writings of any other authors, however holy and learned. He clearly makes his own the thought of St. Augustine: "Solis eis Scripturarum libris qui canonici appellantur, didici hunc honorem deferre, ut nullum auctorem eorum in scribendo errasse aliquid firmissime credam. Alios autem ita lego, ut quantalibet sanctitate doctrinaque praepolleant, non ideo verum putem, quod ipsi ita senserunt vel scripserunt." St. Aug., *Epist. Ad Hieronymum* 82 (al. 19), c. 1, n. 3: ML 33, 277; quoted in Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.* I, 1, 8, ad 2. ["I have learned to give, only to those books of Scripture which are called canonical, the honor of most firmly believing that no author of theirs makes any mistake in writing. But I read others in such a way that, however outstanding they may be in holiness and learning, I do not therefore think they are true. They themselves thought or wrote the same."]

## “Revelation” through the Fathers

This final determination of the canon does not do away with the Fathers. “They are the bearers of a new spiritual ‘revelation’ without which the Scriptures simply would not be effective as revelation.”<sup>387</sup> (They would be objectively, in fact, revealed by God, in their outward letter, but they would “reveal” nothing to any mind or heart.)

Furthermore, it amounts to essentially the same thing when Trent<sup>388</sup> and a series of later ecclesiastical statements (esp. the Syllabus of Pius X,<sup>389</sup>) declare the exegesis of the Fathers to be a normal principle of Scriptural exegesis as such. Such statements can hardly be related meaningfully to the literal explanation, i.e. to the purely historical exegesis; they are concerned rather with that “allegoria” which has as its object the “quid credendum”.<sup>390</sup> In other words, it has to do with the dogmatic-ecclesial exegesis. Only when they are thus understood do these statements have a consistent meaning.<sup>391</sup>

Joseph Ratzinger points out that “a fixation of the symbolic interpretation of Scripture has taken place.” Also, that we have a concept of the age of revelation [deeper understanding. L. Gl.] extended far beyond the lives of the Apostles. “The entire concept of the Canon which we find here is thinkable only on the presupposition of a dynamic understanding of revelation [inner understanding. L. Gl.] which cannot be given a definitive, temporal fixation.”<sup>392</sup> The Scholastics did put a time limit on revelation [here objective, non-Bonaventurian]. L. Gl.] but, as Ratzinger says, “...It carries within itself the seed of its own destruction.”<sup>393</sup> Awareness of this will help explain the rise of Joachimism.

The treatment of Saint Bonaventure’s use of Scripture and the Fathers has been a lengthy one. But he needs this, for he is, to our age, as idiosyncratic as he was conformist to his own. And he deserves it, for he labored with industry and intelligence according to the norms imposed on him.

## An Example of St. Bonaventure’s Use of the Fathers in regard to Mary

In his exposition *On the Sentences*, the Seraphic Doctor quotes St. John Damascene:

<sup>387</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexameron*. 19; X, 421; Ratzinger, p. 80.

<sup>388</sup> Denzinger, 785-6; *The Church teaches; documents of the Church in English translation* (Rockford, Ill.: Tan Books, 1973) nos. 97, 98.

<sup>389</sup> Denzinger, 2001ff; *Church teaches*, nos. 112ff. Cf. *Divino afflante spiritu*, nos. 24, 28, 29.

<sup>390</sup> Bonaventure, *De reduct. Artium*, 5.

<sup>391</sup> Ratzinger, p. 80, n. 10, 204.

<sup>392</sup> Ratzinger, p. 80.

<sup>393</sup> Ratzinger, p. 80.

“Nestorius, as the Damascene, a true teacher, narrates, wished to call her Mother of Christ, not Mother of God, as if she had borne a mere human. And therefore, the Damascene, a true doctor and lover of the Virgin, teaches us to flee from this word, not because it is false, but because the heretic wished to hide poison under it. Therefore, the Damascene, in Book Three, Chapter Twelve: “We do not call the Virgin *Christotokos*, because the wicked and shameful Nestorius invented this with his father, the devil.”<sup>394</sup>

### 3. Franciscan and Dominican Perspectives

St. Thomas has a view of both of these sources basically similar to that of our own day. He can be called “objectivist” in comparison to St. Bonaventure, who, here as elsewhere, emphasizes the knowing subject. According to him, the reader of Scripture needs previous illumination, then can go beyond the letter of Scripture to achieve “revelation” – in Bonaventure’s sense of the word – and wisdom. The Seraphic Doctor so emphasizes the subjective predisposition and consequent personal perfection as to endanger any objective literal meaning to the words of the Bible. The objective literal sense is achieved through the witness of the Fathers.

Faithful Catholics will see the need for good previous disposition to avoid the distortions of Scripture produced by some and also see the words of the Bible not as an end in themselves but as part of God’s forming for Himself a holy people. Professional Scripture scholars of today will emphasize these less-than-devout layfolk far less than St. Bonaventure. They will probably feel more comfortable with the more sophisticated objectivism of St. Thomas.

St. Bonaventure’s strong emphasis on the subjective pole of Scripture study and St. Thomas’ focusing on the objective prove the sixth point of Part One, that their attitudes toward the study of the Bible are very different and their theologies, also on this point, differ greatly.

<sup>394</sup> St. John Damascene, *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Bk 3, Chap. 12; Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, conclus.; III, p. 11 6. ...Nestorius, ut narrat Damascenus, verus doctor, voluit eam *Christi genetricem*, non *Dei genetricem* appellare, quasi purum hominem genuisset. Et ideo Damascenus, verus doctor et virginis amator, docet nos vocabulum hoc effugere, non quia falsum, sed quia hereticus sub illo volebat occultare venenum. Unde Damascenus tertio libro, capitulo duodecimo: “Christotocon, id est Christi genetricem, non dicimus Virginem; quoniam in destructionem *Theotokos*, id est Dei genetricis, vocis nequam et inquinatus Nestorius cum patre eius diabolo invenit.”

## THE CONTEXT OF BONAVENTURE

## The Franciscan Vocation

As a child between seven and fourteen years of age, St. Bonaventure was miraculously cured by the intervention of St. Francis of Assisi (not in person: he had died.) Because of this, he always had a special love for Francis. Bougerol says it gave a special character to his Franciscan vocation.<sup>395</sup> That vocation of his was different from that of present-day Franciscans, who relate to and are attracted by the inner spirit and attitudes of Francis. Bonaventure was too near him in time. "The interior Franciscan reality seems to strike him less at first than does the exterior of this brotherhood which, beginning with the same littleness and abasement as the Church itself, now witnesses the masters of intelligence coming down to meet the humble Friars. Alexander of Hales is a potent example of this."<sup>396</sup> As the Seraphic Doctor himself says, "'I confess before God that the reason which made me love most of all the life of blessed Francis is the fact that it resembles the beginning and the growth of the Church. The Church, indeed, began with simple fishermen, and was enriched later with the most illustrious and learned doctors."<sup>397</sup>

For all of Bonaventure's deep attachment to St. Francis and his Order, its inner conflicts, which would absorb him as general superior, had little impact on him while in Paris. "...The heated arguments of the Spirituals died on the doorstep of the monastery, as on the shores of a foreign world."<sup>398</sup>

Bonaventure's devotion to his founder affected also his understanding of Holy Scripture. The life of St. Francis had created a new exegetical situation. He had dared to live directly by the Gospel, *sine glossa*, "in an immediate encounter with the Lord Who speaks to us in the sacred writings"<sup>399</sup>. In the words of his Testament, "...There was no one to tell me what I should do; but the Most High himself made it clear to me that I must live the life of the Gospel."<sup>400</sup> As Ratzinger puts it, "All tradition is of no avail against the immediate word of the Lord."<sup>401</sup> This direct appeal to the letter of the Bible had to be defended to contemporary theologians and it involved at least the beginnings of a new understanding of tradition.

<sup>395</sup> Bougerol, pp. 3f.

<sup>396</sup> Bougerol, p. 4.

<sup>397</sup> Bonaventure, *Epistula ad magistrum innominatum*, n. 13; VIII, p. 336.

<sup>398</sup> Bougerol, p. 19.

<sup>399</sup> Ratzinger, p. 80.

<sup>400</sup> *St. Francis of Assisi: writings and early biographies; English Omnibus of the sources for the life of St. Francis*, ed. M. Habig (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973) p. 68.

<sup>401</sup> Ratzinger, p.81.

## The School of the Franciscans at Paris

St. Bonaventure insisted he wished to follow his teachers in everything. If anywhere our voice has resounded but little, it has not gone past the paternal limits.<sup>402</sup> These "fathers" included Alexander of Hales, John of La Rochelle and Eudes (or "Odo") Rigaud. "He explicitly calls himself the continuator of Alexander,..."<sup>403</sup>

With regard to Aristotle and Augustine, Bonaventure's path was marked out for him by Alexander of Hales and the School of the Minors at Paris.

Very early, the School of the Minors took a definite position in the face of the Aristotelian invasion. Rather than risk a decreasing fervor in religious spirit that might have resulted from the study of the philosophers, it chose to judge Aristotle in the light of Augustine. Alexander of Hales marked out the way in which the whole of Franciscan thought was to develop.

One key concept, received by Bonaventure from Alexander was the concept of "dignity," as distinctive of "person."<sup>404</sup>

Eudes Rigaud was one of those who directed the School to an affective theology:

Eudes was the first to note the importance of the *habitus fidei*, which is neither faith nor demonstrative science, but understanding perfecting the intellect with the sole intention of improving the *affectus*. It was Eudes who definitely geared the Order of Friars Minor in its approach to faith.<sup>405</sup>

The theology Bonaventure was taught was called "Augustinian," though it was the thought of Augustine as enriched by St. Anselm and the Victorines:

Augustinianism is not a system. It is a complex of themes growing out of Augustine's personal history, which we might define as "a Platonic impulsion achieved by Christian revelation."<sup>406</sup> The same themes may be found anew in the Bonaventurian synthesis in which medieval Augustinianism came to its flowering<sup>407</sup>

<sup>402</sup> Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, "Prologus Magistri;" I, p. 17. "Sicubi vero parum vox nostra insonuit, non paternis discessit limitibus."

<sup>403</sup> Gilson, *Phil. of Bonaventure*, p. 2; "... Fratris Alexandri, patris et magistri nostri, . . ." Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d. 23, a. 2, q. 3, ad 7; II, p. 547; "At quemadmodum in primo libro sententiis adhaesi et communibus opinionibus magistrorum, et potissime magistri at patris nostri bonae memoriae fratris Alexandri, sic in consequentibus libris ab eorum vestigiis non recedam." Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, "Praelocutio;" II, p. 1.

<sup>404</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 10, a. 1, q. 3, resp.; III, p. 230. Cf. Hayes, *Hidden Center*, pp. 80f.

<sup>405</sup> Bougerol, pp. 17f.

<sup>406</sup> J. Chevalier, *Histoire de la pensée, Vol II La pensée chrétienne* (Paris: Flammarion, 1956), p. 112.

<sup>407</sup> Bougerol, p. 32; cf. E. Gilson, *La philosophie au moyen âge des origines patristiques à la fin du XIVe siècle*, 2d. ed. (Paris: Payot, 1944), p. 88; M. Grabmann, *Geschichte der scholastischen Methode*, 2vols. (Berlin - Darmstadt, 1957), vol. I, pp. 125 - 143; L. Meier, "Bonaventuras Selbstzeugnis über sein Augustinismus," *Franziskanische Studien* 17 (1930), pp. 342-355.

The thought of Augustine ...reached Bonaventure in a form enriched with important intellectual developments and with the spiritual fervor of many saints, ...At the same time, Bonaventure was being formed in a special spiritual climate: that of the Franciscan School, whose particular character led him to develop from an original viewpoint certain elements of the Augustinian tradition.<sup>408</sup>

"...The most important thing" Bonaventure learned in his eight years of study was 'the grasp he acquired of Scripture and of the 'authorities.' This understanding visibly increases throughout the course of his teaching down to his final work, the *Collationes in hexaemeron*, yet it is in evidence in his very first writing, the *Commentaries*."<sup>409</sup>

The young Franciscan heard St. Albert the Great – not then quite an "auctoritas" – many times, his preaching, disputations, and "determinations." "This was the time when Albert lead the School of the Preachers to make a decisive turn, by injecting the philosophers into the teaching of theology."<sup>410</sup> Bougerol assures us that, "In various passages of his [Bonaventure's] writings, reminiscences of Albert the Great may be found, so clear that they cannot be the result of coincidence."<sup>411</sup>

"Authorities" were found in collections. "Theologians generally made use of three collections: those of Peter Lombard, Gratian (mostly part III), and Walafrid Strabo. These compilations put an end to the efforts of research:..."<sup>412</sup> Contradictions would be found in "authorities." Theologians of the time, little bothered, solved them summarily.

Theologians were not much concerned with reducing the contradictions they discovered in the text of the "authorities." All followed the example of Peter Lombard, who was content to set the different texts side by side, or attempted to reconcile the discordant assertions by what has been called a "pious" interpretation.<sup>413</sup>

Bonaventure himself says of this reconciliation: "We should not bend the authority of the saints to our reason, but on the contrary, submit our reason to the authority of the saints wherever there is no express absurdity [transl. J. de Vinck]."<sup>414</sup>

<sup>408</sup> Bougerol, p. 18.

<sup>409</sup> Bougerol, p. 18.

<sup>410</sup> Bougerol, p. 18.

<sup>411</sup> "We should accept this without criticism . . .," meaning that what is considered plagiarism today was the universal and quite innocent practice then. Bougerol, p. 19.

<sup>412</sup> Bougerol, p. 25.

<sup>413</sup> J. de Ghellinck, *Le mouvement théologique du XIIIe siècle*, 2d. ed. (Louvain, 1948), p. 233.

<sup>414</sup> Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 15, p. 1, a. unic., q. 4: I, p. 265.: "Non debemus auctores Sanctorum trahere ad nostram rationem, sed magis e converso rationem nostram auctoritatibus sanctorum subijcere, ubi non continent expressam absurditatem."

## AUGUSTINE AND OTHER FATHERS

Bougerol tells us the medieval theologians seldom quoted from pre-Nicene sources, although the post-Nicene Fathers are frequently cited.<sup>415</sup> He also says the Latin Fathers were more readily available to the masters, although St. Bonaventure quoted St. John Damascene over two hundred times and Pseudo-Dionysius was even more important to him. The Latin Father most cited, by theologians in general, was St. Augustine. Then Ambrose, Jerome, and Gregory the Great. St. Bonaventure did not quote St. Bede and St. Anselm. Only later did these writers become popular.<sup>416</sup>

Bonaventure called St. Augustine, "The greatest of the Latin Fathers,"<sup>417</sup> and "supereminent Doctor."<sup>418</sup>

His [Augustine's] living experience of the needs of the human soul, and of the answers to those needs in terms of Christianity, provided for the son of St. Francis [Bonaventure] precisely what he expected from a doctor and a saint.

It was to Augustine ...that Bonaventure attached himself definitively.

[For Bonaventure] There is no quest for a better knowledge of God without an effort to love Him and to reach Him through contemplation....Between Augustine and Bonaventure, then, the community of aspiration was complete.<sup>419</sup>

It was his [Bonaventure's] constant doctrine that "faith precedes understanding" and that "in order to understand, we must first believe, that is, humble and submit ourselves."<sup>420</sup>

Bonaventure's following of St. Augustine was not a question of repeating words or sentences:

Augustinianism is not a system. It is a complex of themes growing out of Augustine's personal history, which we might define as "a Platonic impulsion achieved by Christian revelation."<sup>421</sup> The same themes may be found anew in the Bonaventurian synthesis in which medieval Augustinianism came to its flowering.<sup>422</sup>

<sup>415</sup> Bougerol, p. 25.

<sup>416</sup> Bougerol, p. 25.

<sup>417</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 2, a.2, q. 1; III, p. 86.

<sup>418</sup> "Doctoris precipui;" Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, p. 3, chap. 8; V, p. 237; transl. J. de Vrink.

<sup>419</sup> Bougerol, p. 31.

<sup>420</sup> J. Chevalier, *Histoire de la pensée*, vol. 2, *La pensée chrétienne*, (Paris: Flammarion, 1956), p. 82.

<sup>421</sup> J. Chevalier, *Histoire de la pensée*, vol. 2, p. 112.

<sup>422</sup> Bougerol, p. 32; E. Gilson, *La philosophie au Moyen Age des origines patristiques à la fin du XIVe siècle*, 2d ed. (Paris: Payot, 1944), p. 88; cf. M. Grabmann, *Geschichte der scholastischen Methode*, (Berlin-Darmstadt, 1957), vol 1, p. 125-143; L. Meier, "Bonaventuras Selbstzeugnis über seinen Augustinianismus," *Franziskanische Studien* 17 (1930), pp. 342-355.

We conclude that Bonaventure related closely to St. Augustine, identified with him, and depended on him. Of course, his Augustinianism was not purely from St. Augustine. "The thought of St. Augustine ...reached Bonaventure in a form enriched with important intellectual developments and with the spiritual fervor of many saints."<sup>423</sup> He said he intended to depart in no way from what he had received from his teachers. "But if anywhere our voice resounds but little, it has not gone beyond paternal limits."<sup>424</sup>

The "paternal limits" can be found in the *Summa Theologica* of Alexander of Hales, written by Alexander, John of La Rochelle, Eudes Rigaud, William of Middleton, and Bonaventure himself. "The doctrine is that of traditional Augustinianism: that is, the Augustinianism of St. Augustine as recast by St. Anselm and enlarged with the speculations of the School of Saint-Victor."<sup>425</sup>

### St. Anselm

Little was known of this author until the middle of the thirteenth century. St. Bonaventure, St. Thomas Aquinas and most of all Alexander of Hales were heralds of his fame for whom the Anselmian *fides quarens intellectum* was the essence of theology.<sup>426</sup> For Bonaventure, too, "the *fides quarens intellectum* has an absolute value."<sup>427</sup>

Anselm's – and Bonaventure's – most famous proof for God's existence is reminiscent of the "ontological proof" which Kant found in Descartes. And the Seraphic Doctor does say, "By the very reason that it is most evidently false to say that one and the same thing exists and does not exist, or that the being which exists to the supreme degree does not exist, it is most evidently true that the first and supreme being exists."<sup>428</sup> It may seem that he is simply defining God as existing, as Kant deplores. But Bonaventure holds the mind perceives God's existence as an object distinct from itself. "...Our intelligence seizes in some way God/s very being."<sup>429</sup> In this life, we do not perceive God directly in himself, i.e. have an *intuition* of him. We have a partial and obscure "*contuition*" of him in things, in our soul, and in transcendent principles.

<sup>423</sup> Bougerol, p. 18.

<sup>424</sup> Bonaventure, *Prologus Magistri in Libros Sententiarum*; I, p.17. "Sicubi vero parum vox nostra insonuit, non a paternis discessit limitibus."

<sup>425</sup> Bougerol, p. 15.

<sup>426</sup> Bougerol, pp. 34f.

<sup>427</sup> Bougerol, p. 37.

<sup>428</sup> Bonaventure, *Quaestiones disputatae de mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 1, a. 1, conclus.; V, p. 49; transl. J. de Vrink.

<sup>429</sup> Bougerol, p. 36.



This indirect apprehension by thought of an object which itself eludes us, the presence of which is in some way implied in the effects which follow from it, receives the name 'contuitus' in St. Bonaventure's teaching. Intuition is just the direct knowledge of God which is refused us; "contuituition," in the proper sense, is only the apprehension in a perceived result of the presence of a cause which we cannot discover intuitively; divine light therefore cannot be immediately perceived, although it acts upon us immediately<sup>430</sup>

Some in natural theology, characteristically Thomists, laudably seek a correctly formed logical syllogism. The Seraphic Doctor's arguments are more informal, almost suggestions. His proofs:

tend less to demonstrating God's existence than to displaying the evidence of the fact. . . and to leading the mind progressively toward that full light which shall render useless such proofs as the disciples of Saint Thomas Aquinas will never on earth consent to do away with.<sup>431</sup>

I believe the disciples of St. Thomas have every right to adhere to the Aristotelian logic of their teacher.

Did the Franciscan Master here distort St. Anselm's thought? Bougerol says, "We believe he did not."<sup>432</sup>

#### The School of St. Victor

Gilson, on the context of St. Bonaventure, tells us, "...The work of thinkers like Hugh and Richard of St. Victor exceed in breadth and solidity anything previously produced by the mediaeval West: their writings were veritable summas of mystical inspiration, and the *De sacramentis* and the *De Trinitate* the immediate sources of Bonaventure's synthesis."<sup>433</sup>

In one place, Hugh of St. Victor writes of Mary, in terms Barré calls "magnificent.":

"You are wholly beautiful, my love (Cant. 4:7) O admirable lover! O incomparable teacher! What is it you say? She is your mother, your love. And how is she your love? Can we believe your mother is your love? But how? Certainly she is your love and your mother. Your love because untouched, your mother because fruitful. Indeed, because you are the son of integrity and the lover of fecundity, you have a virgin for a mother and a loved one rejoicing over her child.

<sup>430</sup> Gilson, *Phil. of Bonaventure*, p.362

<sup>431</sup> J. Châtillon, "De Guillaume d'Auxerre à Saint Thomas d'Aquin: l'argument de Saint Anselme chez les premiers scolastiques du XIIIe siècle," *Spicilegium Beccense*, Paris, 1959, p. 229.

<sup>432</sup> Bougerol, p. 37.

<sup>433</sup> E. Gilson, *The philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, transl. I. Trethowan and F. Sheed (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1965.

First, your love bore you, the mother and virgin Mary, afterwards, your love was born from you, mother and virgin Church. Coming in the flesh, you became the son of your spouse, a mother and a virgin in body; dying in the flesh, you became the parent of your spouse, a virgin by faith. Taking birth from your spouse, you received the substance of infirmity; dying, you gave your spouse the sacraments of incorruption.

On both sides a marvelous lover, on both sides an unparalleled lover: you loved your spouse so as to take birth from her, and you loved your spouse so as to die for her. And your spouse is one, "one is thy dove, thy flawless one; in the eyes of her mother, beyond compare, the special darling of the one who bore her (Cant. 6:8)." So, therefore, call your spouse, invite your love. Call, O handsome one, the beautiful, O splendid one, the graceful, O beloved, the *unequaled*.<sup>434</sup>

Following the example of Alexander of Hales, the Seraphic Doctor read the works of both of these Victorines and made use of them.<sup>435</sup> More specifically than Gilson has just told us, Hugh's *Eruditio didascalica* was the inspiration for Bonaventure's *De reductione artium ad theologiam* and his *De sacramentis christianae fidei tractatus* supplied the basic theme of the *Breviloquium*.<sup>436</sup> The Franciscan's *Quaestiones disputatae de mysterio Trinitatis* "shows perceptible traces" of Richard of St. Victor's *De Trinitate*.<sup>437</sup>

#### Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite

Bougerol tells us, in relation to Pseudo-Denis, "It was the religious bent of Neoplatonism which assured its success. The symbolism of light, for instance, appealed to every medieval author as an expression of the metaphysics of emanationism."<sup>438</sup> He adds, " ...His influence on Bonaventure was threefold: he gave

<sup>434</sup> Hugh of St. V. *De Assumptione Beatae Mariae*, PL 177, 1211 AB. "Tota pulchra es, amica mea (Cant. 4: 7)." O admirabilis amator! O singularis doctor! Quid dicis? Ipsa est genitrix tua, amica tua. Et quomodo amica tua? Num genetricem ipsam credimus tuam amicam? Aut quomodo? Certe amica est tua et genitrix tua. Amica tua quod intacta, genitrix tua quod fecunda. Tu siquidem integritatis filius et fecunditatis amicus, matrem habes virginem et amicam prole laetantem.

Prius te genuit amica tua, mater et virgo Maria; postea de te genita est amica tua, mater et virgo Ecclesia. In carnem veniens factus es filius sponsae tuae matris et virginis corpore; in carne moriens factus es genitor sponsae tuae virginis fide. Nascendo de sponsa tua accepisti substantiam infirmitatis; moriendo, sponsae tuae dedisti sacramenta incorruptionis.

Utrobique dilector mirabilis, utrobique amator singularis: sponsam tuam dilexisti ut in ea nasceris, et sponsam tuam dilexisti ut pro ea moreris. Et una est sponsa tua, "una est columba tua, perfecta tua; una est matri suae, una electa genetrici suae (Cant. VI,8)." Voca ergo sponsam tuam, invita amicam tuam. Voca formosus pulchram, speciosus decoram, dilectus *unicam*.

<sup>435</sup> Bougerol, pp. 37f.

<sup>436</sup> Bougerol, p. 38.

<sup>437</sup> Bougerol, p. 39.

<sup>438</sup> Bougerol, p. 40.

Bonaventure a viewpoint, a method, and a few fundamental themes. The viewpoint is mystical, the method is hierarchical ascent through purification, illumination, and perfection. The themes, besides hierarchy, include participation and symbolism.<sup>439</sup>

### St. Bernard

St. Bonaventure often used St. Bernard. The abbot of Clairvaux says the woman clothed in the sun in the Apocalypse, chapter twelve, is the Church. But we can also see Mary there: "plane non inconvenienter."<sup>440</sup> Bernard said he placed his hope in the intercession of the Virgin.<sup>441</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor quotes St. Bernard ninety times on Marian topics. He follows the Mellifluous Doctor in saying God prepared for Mary in the history of salvation, showing something of her to Moses, Aaron, Gideon, Solomon, Jeremiah, and Isaiah, using three times the same quotation from Bernard's "Homily on 'Gabriel was sent'."<sup>442</sup> On all the following, Bonaventure quotes Bernard directly at least once. She is the sprout of Jesse, according to words quoted.<sup>443</sup> Mary's womb is like an ever-green pasture bringing forth an unfading flower.<sup>444</sup> She was a great sign, never seen before or since.<sup>445</sup> Never was it heard that someone be mother and, at the same time, a virgin.<sup>446</sup> Mary's name is above every name.<sup>447</sup> She would not have become Mother of God if she had the slightest pride in her.<sup>448</sup> She is an example of true humility.<sup>449</sup> She is even more a teacher of humility<sup>450</sup> and this humility renders her powerful.<sup>451</sup>

<sup>439</sup> Bougerol, pp. 40f.

<sup>440</sup> Bernard, *Sermo de Dominica infra octavam Assumptionis*, PL 183, p.430; Cf. H. Barré, "Marie et l'église du Vénérable Bède à Saint Albert le Grand," *Etudes Mariiales* 9 (1951), p. 61.

<sup>441</sup> Bernard, *In Nativ. B.M., Sermo 6*; PL 183, p. 441.

<sup>442</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 2, n. 9; IV, 28f; Bonaventure, "Sermo de Annuntiatione," 1; IX, p. 659; "Annuntiatione," 2; IX, p.669; *Collationes de donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, n.9; V, p.485.

<sup>443</sup> Bernard, "In Annuntiatione," sermo 3, n. 7; V, 39); Bonaventure, *Comment. in Luc.*, c. 1, n. 43; VII, p. 21.

<sup>444</sup> Bernard, "In Adventu," sermo. 2, n. 4; IV, 173; Bonaventure, "Annunt." 5; IX, p. 679.

<sup>445</sup> Bernard, "In Assumptione," sermo 4, n. 5; V, 248; Bonaventure, "Assumpt." 6; IX, p.701; "Nativ. B.V.M." 1; IXX, p.708.

<sup>446</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 1, nn. 7 & 9; IV, 18-21; Bonaventure, "Annunt," 2; IX, p. 664.

<sup>447</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 2,, nn. 4-11; IV, 23-29; Bonaventure, *Comm. In Luc.* C. 1, n. 45; VII, p. 22.

<sup>448</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 1, n. 5; V, 17f; Bonaventure, *Perf. vit.*, c. 2, n. 3; VIII, pp. 110f.

<sup>449</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 2, n. 4; IV, 23f; Bonaventure, "Annunt." 2; IX, p. 669.

When discussing the Immaculate Conception in his *Commentary on the Sentences*, Book III, 3, p. 1, he quotes, fourteen times, St. Bernard's letter reproving the canons of Lyons for celebrating that feast.<sup>452</sup> Graef says he did not wish to go beyond the testimony of the Bible and the Fathers.<sup>453</sup> Although the Mellifluous Doctor opposed the Immaculate Conception, he held that Mary was sanctified superabundantly before birth.<sup>454</sup> Such sanctity constitutes the mystery of the Virgin Mary, whom God freely chose and who freely gave herself to him.<sup>455</sup>

With Mary, God renews the dialog that man had broken off.<sup>456</sup> Through her faith, Mary cooperated with the Incarnation, not as an effective principle but as a meritorious principle.<sup>457</sup> St. Bernard commented on the text, "Nothing is impossible with God," and Bonaventure quotes him.<sup>458</sup> The Mellifluous Doctor also says, to Bonaventure's echo, that God recreated through, in, and from Mary, everything he had created.<sup>459</sup> On earth, there was no place more worthy than the temple of the womb into which Mary welcomed the Son of God; in heaven, there is no place more worthy than the royal throne on which the Son of God has placed his Mother.<sup>460</sup> She was inundated by the inaccessible light of divine wisdom.<sup>461</sup>

One memorable text quoted is this:

<sup>450</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 4, n. 10; IV, 55f; Bonaventure, *Perf. vit.*, c. 2, n.7; VIII, 112.; "Vig. Nativ.," 1; IX, p. 91.

<sup>451</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 4, n. 9; IV, 54f.; Bonaventure, "Annunt. 3; IX 669; *Comment. in Luc.*, c. 1, nn. 66-69; VII, p. 26f.

<sup>452</sup> Bernard, "Epist. 174," n. 7; PL 182, 335f.; Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, fund.; III p.61.

<sup>453</sup> Graef, *Mary*, vol. I, p. 236.

<sup>454</sup> Bernard, "Epist. 174," n. 5; PL 182, 334; Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 1, fund. 2; III, p.72).

<sup>455</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 2, n. 4; IV, 23; Bonaventure, *Collationes de donis S. Spir.*, coll. 6, n. 6; V, p. 484.

<sup>456</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 2, n. 13; IV, 30; Bonaventure, *Comment. in Luc.*, c. 1, n. 40; VII, p. 20.

<sup>457</sup> Bernard, *De Consider.* V, c. 10, n. 22 &23; III, 484f; Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d.4. a. 2, q. 2., fund. 3; III, p. 106; *Comment. in Luc.*, c. 13, n. 45; VII, p. 349.

<sup>458</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 4, nn. 7, 9, 11; IV, 706; Bonaventure, *Comment. in Luc.*, c. 1, n. 66-69; VII, pp. 26-27.

<sup>459</sup> Bernard, *In Pentec.*, sermo 2, n. 4; V, 168; Bonaventure, *Assumpt.*, 6; IX, 706; *Annunt.* 4; IX, p. 341f.

<sup>460</sup> Bernard, "In Assumpt.," sermo 1, n. 3; V, 230; Bonaventure, *Coll. Jn.*, c. 2, coll. 10, n. 4; VI, p. 549.

<sup>461</sup> Bernard, "In dom. in oct. Assumpt.," n. 3; V, 264; Bonaventure, *Comment. in Luc.*, c. 10, n. 79; VII, p. 277.

How familiar with Christ you have been made, my Lady, how near, indeed how intimate you have merited to become! How much favor you have found with him! He dwells in you and you with him; you both clothe him and are clothed by him; you clothe him with the substance of flesh, he clothes you with the glory of his majesty.<sup>462</sup>

The fecundity of Mary is integral and happy.<sup>463</sup> She is not mother only of the human composite, of body and soul. She is the Mother of God, for in Jesus Christ there is only one Person in two natures.<sup>464</sup> St. Bernard tells us Mary is all-powerful in intercession; St. Bonaventure quotes that text eight times.<sup>465</sup>

These are some of the citations by Bonaventure of Bernard. They suffice to show the admiration in which the Franciscan Doctor held him.

### Aristotle and Bonaventure

Alexander of Hales, is perhaps chief among those fathers to whom Bonaventure professed total fidelity.<sup>466</sup> He quoted from most of the books of Aristotle. But, we are told, "...He had no clear idea of the true meaning of Aristotelian philosophy.... His work belongs to a period when no collective theological effort had been made to assimilate the newly discovered Aristotelian world."<sup>467</sup> Aristotle was then unassimilated but certainly not rejected by Bonaventure's respected teacher.

Gilson tells us:

The better Aristotle's teaching comes to be known, the more numerous will these borrowings [by Christian thought. L. Gl.] be seen to be; those of St. Bonaventure are continual: the distinction of act and potency, and the theory of the four kinds of causes – to take only two examples in a hundred – were suggestions which he

<sup>462</sup> Bernard, "In dom. in oct. Assumpt.," sermo , n. 6; V, 266. Bonaventure, "Annunt.," 5; IX, p. 679. Quam familiaris Christo facta es, Domina, quam proxima, immo quam intima fieri meruisti! Quantum invenisti gratiam apud eum! In te manet et tu cum eo; et vestis eum et vestiris ab eo; vestis eum substantia carnis, vestit te ille gloria suae maiestatis.

<sup>463</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 2, n.5; Bonaventure, *Collationes de donis Spir. Sant.*, coll. 6, n.3; V, p. 483f.

<sup>464</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," serm. 2, n. 9; IV, 27; Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 8, a. 1, q. 1, arg. 6; III, p. 186.

<sup>465</sup> Bernard, "Homilia super Missus est," sermo 2, n. 17; IV, 34f.; Bonaventure, *Solil.*, c. 1, n. 23; VIII, p. 37; "20 Pentecost.," 1; IX, p. 432; "Annunt.," 2; IX, p. 665; "Annunt." 4; IX, p. 673; "Annunt." 5; IX, p. 680; "Assumpt.," 1; IX, p. 690; "Nativ. B.V.M.," 2; IX, pp. 710f; "Nativ. B.V.M.," 5; IX, p. 718;)

<sup>466</sup> "Sicubi vero parum vox nostra insonuit, non a paternis discessit limitibus."["But if anywhere our voice resounds but little, it has not gone beyond paternal limits."]

<sup>467</sup> A. Emmen, "Alexander of Hales," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*.

was to develop fruitfully in all sorts of ways. He was even to utilize them in the interpretation of the words of St. Francis.<sup>468</sup>

In relation to Aristotle, the Seraphic Doctor was not simply an enemy. He called the Stagirite the Prince of Peripatetics<sup>469</sup> and the most excellent of philosophers.<sup>470</sup> He quoted him nine hundred thirty times, from every book of Aristotle except the yet-untranslated *Politics*. All this hardly shows a hostile attitude. The Franciscan Master recognized Aristotle as an authority in matters of natural knowledge while denying him any value as a guide to wisdom, and to his writings any use toward the salvific aspect of theology. Hayes tells us:

...As Bonaventure has pointed out on many occasions, the best that human reason has achieved – the philosophy of Aristotle – is in conflict with the faith on a number of critical issues. He can envision no self-sufficient philosophy but sees philosophy as a stage in the broader context of the ascent of creation to God.<sup>471</sup> What he rejected was the thought of Siger de Brabant and the Latin Averroists, who applied Aristotelian philosophy where it did not properly belong. It was the men of his own time who returned to a pre-Christian position, neglecting the lights of faith to adopt a pagan's belief that Bonaventure rose against.<sup>472</sup>

Of course, we should remember his very limited esteem for the whole discipline of philosophy, since all truth, for him, is contained in Christ. Elsewhere, we find very incomplete truths. Buckley tells us:

A few quotations from the works of the Franciscan Master will show how worthless he considers any knowledge apart from Christ:

"The philosophical science is the way to other sciences; but he who wishes to stay there falls into darkness."<sup>473</sup>

"Hence all who lack this faith have their hand cut off."<sup>474</sup>

St. Albert the Great had said that philosophy had rights as a separate doctrine. Gilson says of this: "In the eyes of St. Bonaventure, all the evil springs from this. It was not only a question of Averroes, or even of Aristotle: for Plato

<sup>468</sup> Gilson, *Phil. of Bonaventure*, p. 444.

<sup>469</sup> Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d. 1, p. 1, a. 1 q. 1, conclus.; II, p. 17.

<sup>470</sup> Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d. 1, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, conclus.; II, p. 22.

<sup>471</sup> Hayes, *Hidden Center*, p. 213.

<sup>472</sup> Bougerol, p. 26f. Cf. Hadrianus a Krizovljan ("Whose commentaries," Bougerol says, p. 208, note 26, "deserve a careful reading.") "Controversia doctrinalis inter magistros franciscanos et Sigerum de Brabant," *Collectanea franciscana* [Hadrianus, cont'd] 27 (1957), pp. 221-265.

<sup>473</sup> Bonaventure, *De donis Spiritus Sancti*, 4:4 (5: 475b-476a) in Buckley, S53n. "Philosophica scientia via est ad alias scientias; sed qui ibi vult stare cadit in tenebras."

<sup>474</sup> Bonaventure, *In hexaem.* 3:9 (5: 345a), *Works*, V, 47. "Unde omnes, qui non habet hanc fidem, manum habet amputatam." Buckley, p. 54, n. 5.

and every other philosopher remains liable to errors, different but extremely serious, if philosophy is kept separate.”<sup>475</sup>

Philosophy does have a role in the search for wisdom but not as a *source* of wisdom:

...It is in Scripture and only in Scripture that we must seek the source of knowledge...Unfortunately, the interpretation of the Sacred Books is difficult; therefore one must have recourse to the writings of the Fathers. And the interpretation of the writings of the Fathers is difficult, so that one must have recourse to the Summas wherein the theologians cast light upon their difficulties. But these last books of necessity use the language of the philosophers and thereby draw us to read the works from which the philosophic expressions come.<sup>476</sup>

Zachary Hayes says, of Bonaventure’s view of natural reason and philosophy:

While human reason is a gift of God, it must be willing to accept the tutelage of revelation. Philosophical investigation is a stage in the unfolding of the human spirit which moves on to theology, and ultimately leaves behind even the efforts of rational theology to move on to the *sapientia nulliformis* of contemplative union. The anticipation of that future state is the *simplex et idiota* Francis of Assisi.<sup>477</sup>

And, in a footnote, Hayes continues:

Ratzinger concludes correctly that what appears as anti-Aristotelianism in Bonaventure is at root the rejection of any self-sufficient philosophy. In as far as Aristotle is seen at that time as the very embodiment of human reason, this qualified acceptance of philosophy is concretely a qualified acceptance of Aristotle. Its provisional character, together with that of rational theology, is seen most emphatically in the Bonaventurian view that looks forward to a final age in which both philosophy and speculative theology will be left behind in favor of contemplative love.<sup>478</sup>

Gilson agrees that Bonaventure’s quarrel is not with Aristotle but with *any* philosophy separated from theology: “It was not a question of Averroes or even of Aristotle: for Plato and every other philosopher remains liable to errors, different but extremely serious, if philosophy is kept separate.” The Seraphic Doctor believes “...Philosophy [has] no field of its own over which theology does not exercise jurisdiction.”<sup>479</sup> “Against their [Averroists – extreme Aristotelians. L. Gl.] three principal errors St Bonaventure sets Christ as cause of being,

<sup>475</sup> Gilson, *Phil. of Bonaventure*, p.26.

<sup>476</sup> Gilson, *Phil of Bonaventure*, p. 29.

<sup>477</sup> Hayes, *The Hidden Center*, p. 213.

<sup>478</sup> Hayes, *The Hidden Center*, p. 213, note 68. Cf. Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure* (Chicago, 1971), pp. 119, ff, 159ff.

<sup>479</sup> Gilson, *Phil. of Bonaventure*, p. 26.

ground of knowledge, and order of life."<sup>480</sup> "Thus, for him, the philosophy of St. Albert and St. Thomas was of necessity in error because, while it situated Christ in the centre of theology, it did not situate Him in the centre of philosophy..."<sup>481</sup>

While Aristotelians decided to leave the prevailing tradition and establish a new one, Franciscan Augustinians, including especially Bonaventure, elected to renovate it and make it more fruitful.<sup>482</sup>

#### ST. BONAVENTURES' USE OF SCRIPTURE

Bonaventure's and Aquinas' use of Scripture was discussed above, in Point Six. But it forms part of their context, therefore it will be briefly reviewed here.

But how well did St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas understand that Scripture? They lived in the days of a flat earth and six twenty-four hour days of creation. We view the Angelic and Seraphic Doctors' scriptural science and that of other medievals through our contemporary eyes, seeing ourselves as ideal and others as vainly struggling to approximate our excellence. But even our contemporary science is not all-perfect. Some retreat into a barricaded fundamentalist fortress. Others embrace a radical criticism that is reductionist and nothing more. Even apart from these extremes, our Scriptural wisdom may still be limited.<sup>483</sup>

Still, in spite of these ideological battles, our present age has many advantages over the time of Sts. Thomas and Bonaventure. Pope Pius XII, in *Divino afflante spiritu*, mentions excavations in the Holy Land,<sup>484</sup> the discovery and skillful editing of ancient codices of the Sacred Books, the examination of the exegesis of the Fathers of the Church,<sup>485</sup> widespread knowledge of biblical languages,<sup>486</sup> philology and literary criticism.<sup>487</sup>

The excellence of contemporary methods does not, however, imply total ignorance in medievals like our two Doctors. To his well-founded praise of modern skills, Pope Pius joins an appreciation of scholars of the past:

<sup>480</sup> Gilson, *Phil. of Bonaventure*, p. 27; Bonaventure, *Collationes de donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 8, nos. 16-20; V, pp 497f.

<sup>481</sup> Gilson, *Phil. of Bonaventure*, p. 28.

<sup>482</sup> R. Lazzarini, *S. Bonaventura filosofo e mistico del Cristianesimo*, Milan 1946, p. 1920.

<sup>483</sup> E. Carroll, "Mary the Mother of Jesus," p. 81.

<sup>484</sup> Pius XII, *Divino afflante spiritu: on promoting biblical studies*, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 35(1943): n. 11.

<sup>485</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 12.

<sup>486</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 15.

<sup>487</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 16.



...The Catholic exegete will find invaluable help in an assiduous study of those works, in which the Holy Fathers, the Doctors of the Church<sup>488</sup> and the renowned interpreters of past ages have explained the Sacred Books. For, although sometimes less instructed in profane learning and in the knowledge of languages than the scripture scholars of our time, nevertheless by reason of the office assigned to them by God in the Church, they are distinguished by a certain subtle insight into heavenly things and by a marvelous keenness of intellect, which enable them to penetrate to the very innermost meaning of the divine word and bring to light all that can help to elucidate the teaching of Christ and promote holiness of life.<sup>489</sup>

*Divino afflante spiritu* is often quoted as if it were an approval of all modern methods and even of their most extreme conclusions. A more complete reading of the encyclical gives us reason to respect the biblical interpretation of St. Bonaventure and his contemporary, St. Thomas.

St. Bonaventure's methods are less familiar to us, more "strange" than Thomas'. Bonaventure is regarded, with some reason, as less scientific than Aquinas. But we shall find he has much science, much logic, much rigor.

Like the Angelic Doctor, St. Bonaventure founds, both his general theology and his thought on Mary, Mother of God, on Scripture, carefully studied. However, the manner in which he presents texts from the Bible will be unfamiliar to the modern reader:

Bonaventure's method in commenting on Scripture does not help contemporary readers to see the broad lines of his thought. For he comments chiefly through extensive quotations from the Old and the New Testaments, seeking whatever in the Bible can illustrate, literally or spiritually, the topic at hand. Then the picture of Mary as a young woman of Nazareth who becomes the mother of the Lord tends to disappear behind a screen of biblical verses which modern readers may not find appropriate. Their connection with Mary is associative rather than strictly typological. Bonaventure's attention has been attracted by similarities in wording between some remote passage of the Old Testament and the text of the *Magnificat*; and he makes as much of it as the exegesis, the spiritual theology and the Marian devotion of his time will allow. But this traditional method, which was still modern when Bonaventure practiced it, has now become generally obsolete. What must have been to the advantage of his thirteenth-century readers has in fact turned into a hindrance for the contemporary taste and look.<sup>490</sup>

Moreover, Bonaventure's extensive culling of scriptural quotations and his search for biblical episodes illustrative of the points in hand are enhanced – or, as some may feel, complicated – by similarly quoting from the Fathers of the Church<sup>491</sup>

<sup>488</sup> Who include Ss. Thomas and Bonaventure [L. Gl].

<sup>489</sup> Pius XII, *ibid.*, n. 28.

<sup>490</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 59f.

<sup>491</sup> St. Bonaventure and medievals generally felt that Scripture reading was incomplete without the instruction of the Fathers, in some cases making them equal to – even superior to – some books of Scripture. See below, "Use of the Fathers."

and more recent authors, not least from St. Bernard, the great singer of Mary in the twelfth century. This quest for "authorities" in the medieval sense of the term was destined to strengthen Bonaventure's theology and interpretations in the eyes of his scholastic readers. It may, indeed, still interest contemporary historians who may wonder about the sources of Bonaventure's thought. Yet it also, unavoidably, acts as an obstacle for the average reader today. With these several handicaps, however, Bonaventure's reflections on Mary may still speak to us, for their theological and Christological depths remain apparent through the successive layers of his exegetical method.<sup>492</sup>

We need, not to reject this method, common in the Middle Ages and derived from even earlier practice, but to *understand it*, learn how to interpret it, and see how it affects his theology in general.

The following, on St. Bonaventure, Scripture and Revelation, depends greatly on Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The theology of history in St. Bonaventure*.<sup>493</sup>

In Scripture interpretation, as elsewhere, St. Bonaventure emphasizes the *person knowing*, the subjective element. But first, we shall consider the other side of the equation, the object known.

Like many today, medievals found words about Mary very few in the Bible. When dealing with the Mother of God, St. Bonaventure had "...to deal with what must have been, in the eyes of the pious faithful of his time, an astonishing fact: the discrepancy between the high place of Mary in Christian devotion and her subdued image in the Gospels."<sup>494</sup> The saint's response is:

It appears from it that little is mentioned in the Scriptures about Mary. For if there is no mention of her in the genealogy, in keeping with the customs of the Scriptures, where it would seem to be all but necessary, still less should there be anything concerning her own actions.<sup>495</sup>

Bonaventure found information on Our Lady throughout the Old Testament in the study of types, still an acceptable practice in our more skeptical time, as Tavard tells us:

...Bonaventure attempts to balance the picture, at least in regard to Mary,<sup>496</sup> by pointing out that there are women in the Old Testament from whose story one can learn about Mary. In other words, there exists a legitimate Marian typology,

<sup>492</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 60f.

<sup>493</sup> (Chicago, Franciscan Herald Press, 1971) transl. Z. Hayes.

<sup>494</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.73.

<sup>495</sup> Bonaventure, *Comment. In Ev. S. Lucae*, cap. 3, #58, trans. G. Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 72.

<sup>496</sup> Bonaventure explains the omission of women from genealogies by a list of womanly "defects," based on Aristotle, Scripture, or medieval traditions. Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.72, Bonaventure, *Comment. In Ev. S. Lucae*, cap. 3, # 58; VII, 85f.

through which Mary is more present in the Scriptures than meets the eye at first sight.<sup>497</sup>

Part of the Seraphic Doctor's objective doctrine on the Bible is on its various senses. For all his emphasis on spiritual sense and metaphorical meanings, he does define the literal sense of Scripture. In the words of Tavard: "...An analytical enquiry into grammar and meaning, or an historical determination of the natural and human events described."<sup>498</sup>

...The Bonaventurian conception of the literal sense of Scripture is quite at variance with the literal reading done in our own days with the tools of scientific exegesis. Bonaventure tends to take the letter of the text at face-value when it is read uncritically. Indeed, he is aware of variant opinions as to the exact sense of various texts or as to the historical context or the geographical location of some of the biblical events. He takes sides or not, depending in part on the relative importance of the problem and its relevance to the piety of faith, in part on the secondary evidence that can be marshaled out of such traditional lights of biblical scholarship as St. Jerome and, more recently, the often anonymous authors of the *glossa* (a more or less literal paraphrase and interpretation of Scripture) and Peter Comestor (d.c. 1179), whose *Historia scholastica* was treated as a source-book on information for biblical history.

Finally, at a different level, the liturgical practice of the Church had to be taken into account. Bonaventure assumed that this practice had been, if not formally inspired, at least providentially guided, by the Holy Spirit.<sup>499</sup>

The Franciscan Doctor finds the meaning of the Old Testament in light of the New. For him, the literal sense of the New Testament is the spiritual sense of the Old. Seeking for spiritual senses of the Gospels, etc., he applies the text to faith, hope, and love. But, in the Old Testament, he searches for anticipations of Christ, finding them in all kinds of associations and similarities between the texts and the realities of the two Covenants.<sup>500</sup>

He enumerates three spiritual senses of Scripture according as they teach doctrine, morals, and end-time. These three spiritual, non-literal senses of Scripture were found in medieval exegesis. The analogical, also referred to as allegorical, taught doctrine. It could be called the flower of faith. The tropological was the moral sense. These two spiritual senses are found most often. The third, the anagogical, is eschatological, referring to "the dimension of eschatology as this can already be experienced in this life by participation and anticipation." The

<sup>497</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 71; "Scriptum tamen in veteri testamento fuit, quod esse poterat figura Virginis in aliquibus mulieribus, quae Mariae et Ecclesiae figuram gesserunt." Bonaventure, *Comment. In Ev. S. Lucae*, cap. 3, # 58; VII, 86.

<sup>498</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 110f.

<sup>499</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 90,91.

<sup>500</sup> G. Tavard, *Transiency and permanence. The method of theology according to St. Bonaventure*, (Alleggheny, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1954) 43-50; cited, Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 115.

latter two senses might be called the flowers of love and of hope, as the analogical was of faith. All these theological virtues were constantly employed in the Seraphic Doctor's exegesis, leading him well beyond the literal sense.<sup>501</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor used a different exegesis in preaching: a mixture of realism and exuberant praise, exploring the spiritual meaning of the Scriptures more than in his scientific studies. And when preaching of Our Lady, he uses much typology, allegorical (or analogical) – referring to doctrine – tropological – or moral – and anagogical – referring to eschatology, as far as it can be realized by anticipation in this life. He also read the literal sense uncritically, seeking only its relevance to piety, and he paid attention to the Church's liturgy, which he believed to be guided by the Holy Spirit.<sup>502</sup>

His method here, according to Tavard, is both Christotypical, taking images which fit Christ, and applying them to Our Lady, as best of Christians, and attributes of the Church, and affirming them more excellently of her. One can reach these further meanings only by relying, not on oneself but on the Holy Spirit.<sup>503</sup>

The above are the objective elements in St. Bonaventure's teaching on Scripture. Now we turn to the elements more important to him, the subjective ones, more important than the objective, both before and after reading the letter of Scripture.

Subjectively, the persons knowing need holiness & "revelation," (illumination) *prior* to the reading of Scripture, in order to attain further "revelation" (deeper understanding) through such reading.<sup>504</sup>

There were predecessors of Bonaventure in regard to this "inner revelation". One of them is Rupert of Deutz. Ratzinger repeats the text of Rupert of Deutz, distinguishing these three kinds of vision, which the Seraphic Doctor followed:

The *visio corporalis* – *corpus*. This refers to the bodily act of seeing.

The *visio spiritualis* – *spiritus*. This is the internal imagination or dreaming.

The saint points out that Pharaoh had a dream but did not understand it.

The *visio intellectualis* – *Mens Dei spiritu illuminata*. He refers to Joseph, who understood the dream through divine illumination.

Rupert says mystical union, "Revelation," (illumination), identical with Biblical inspiration is needed, as much to understand Scripture, as to write it.

<sup>501</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 90.

<sup>502</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 90, 91.

<sup>503</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 113.

<sup>504</sup> Since St. Bonaventure uses the word "revelation" in such a different sense from most Catholics today, I shall enclose it in quotation marks when it is used in a Bonaventurian sense and often add explanatory parentheses.

Rupert sees revelation, according to Ratzinger, only in the *third* kind of vision. This third vision, for him, as for St. Augustine, is the same as the third heaven to which St. Paul was caught up. This was not a privilege unique to Paul for it is *identical with the process of inspiration*, common to all the inspired *authors* of the Biblical books. Since the Holy Word was *born of mystical union* with God, *only thus* can it be *understood*. To read it with the corporal or even spiritual vision is to *misunderstand* the Bible. *St. Bonaventure* has the *same* formal structure as St. Augustine and Rupert, the same distinction of the three kinds of vision.<sup>505</sup> And, like Rupert, the Seraphic Doctor sees “revelation” (divine illumination), as necessary to *understand* the Scriptures and as very *similar* to the divine inspiration of the human *authors* of Scripture.

“Revelation” or deeper understanding, for the Seraphic Doctor, is not the same as Scripture; it goes beyond objective letter. It is *not* the written words of the Bible but the *understanding* of them. The process of “revelation” is the coming to grasp the spiritual sense. It includes a *passing* from the sensible world to the *intelligible* world. This is the unveiling, the “re-vealing” of “revelation,” or deeper understanding.<sup>506</sup> The Scriptural author cannot give us his intellectual vision in its naked spirituality but must dress it in the “swaddling clothes” of human words. “Revelation” is *available* through the Scriptural text but is hidden and needs to be uncovered.<sup>507</sup>

“Revelation” is understood very differently by Bonaventure from twentieth-century Catholics. Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, says, Jesus Christ “...completed and perfected Revelation ...by the total fact of his presence and self-manifestation – by words and works, signs and miracles, but above all by his death and glorious resurrection from the dead, and finally by sending the Spirit of truth.”<sup>508</sup>

All these are objective and, to a great extent, even *sensible* events. Through these objective acts, Jesus perfected Revelation. What about the inward, subjective understanding of this Revelation? A few words later, the *Dogmatic Constitution* continues: “The ...Holy Spirit constantly perfects faith by his gifts, so that Revelation may be more and more profoundly understood.”<sup>509</sup> *Dei Verbum* clearly distinguishes objective revelation from the subjective understanding of it.

The First Vatican Council appears to have a similar, perhaps “objectivist” concept of revelation. It speaks of “...divine mysteries ...delivered by revela-

<sup>505</sup> Ratzinger, p. 65.

<sup>506</sup> Ratzinger, p. 66.

<sup>507</sup> Ratzinger, p. 68.

<sup>508</sup> Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on Revelation (Dei Verbum)*, October 18, 1965, n. 4; *Vatican Council II: The conciliar and postconciliar documents*, A. Flannery, ed. (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press) pp. 751f.

<sup>509</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 5, p. 752.

tion ...and received by faith.<sup>510</sup> Hervé, one of the despised but very serviceable theology manuals, defines revelation in the active sense as "the manifestation, supernaturally done, by God to us of some truth, through speaking."<sup>511</sup> Revelation, taken passively or objectively, he says is, "the ensemble ('complexus') of truths which God has supernaturally manifested to us."<sup>512</sup>

The *General Catechetical Directory*, published by the Vatican, makes a parallel distinction between divine *revelation* and, on the other hand, the grace and secret direction of the Holy Spirit.<sup>513</sup>

"Revelation" is passing from letter to spirit, from the outer to the inner, from the objective to the personal. In general, the Seraphic Doctor means, by "revelation," the "unveiling of the hidden," whether of the future, the mystical meaning of Scripture, or the imageless union with God through the mystical ascent.

He understands the process of "revelation" as the act of penetrating through outside appearances to the spiritual center. This process is ultimately a mystical one, though in borderline cases, sinners may receive and transmit revelation. Even here, "revelation" is the penetrating of outside appearances to the inner spiritual reality, a deeper intellectual vision, a penetration through the objective to the subjective understanding.<sup>514</sup>

St. Bonaventure believes we learn the teaching of the Faith through allegory, rather than through the letter of the Sacred Text. He compares the letter of Scripture to the water, and the spiritual understanding of it to the wine into which it must be transformed, and the bread into which the stone is transformed. The mere letter is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Through spiritual understanding, it turns into the Tree of Life. The act of understanding is given by God. It is *this* that is "revelation," not the letter in itself. P. Dempsey shows the Franciscan Master makes no distinction between "revelation" and inspiration. Medieval theology in general accepted Cassiodorus' definition of prophecy as "inspiration or revelation." Bonaventure brings all three concepts, prophecy, inspiration, and "revelation," close together.<sup>515</sup>

<sup>510</sup> First Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith*, Chapter IV, "Faith and Reason," n. 43 (Denz. 3016); in *The Teaching of the Catholic Church*, ed. K. Rahner (Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1967), p. 36.

<sup>511</sup> J. Hervé, *Manuale Theologiae Dogmaticae*, (Paris: Berche and Pagis, 1949), Vol. I, n. 55, p. 45.

<sup>512</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>513</sup> Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, *General Catechetical Directory*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference: 1971), n. 13, pp. 15f.

<sup>514</sup> Ratzinger, p. 66.

<sup>515</sup> Ratzinger, p. 64.

“Revelation” gives wisdom of various kinds, a subjective deepening of the person.

Ratzinger gives an explanation of the wisdoms arising from “revelation:” the multiform, the omniform, and the nulliform. (N.B. The “uniform” wisdom, knowledge of basic principles, is not included by Ratzinger as arising from “revelation.” It is necessarily present in everyone. Does this mean it needs no special “revealing” act of God? Ratzinger implies this by omitting it here. But the saint attributes it directly to God and refuses to credit it to any creature.

The uniform wisdom is the grasp of the basic principles, the eternal rules of all knowledge. These are the principles by which one judges about everything else.<sup>516</sup> These truths are simply *given* and can be denied only as regards exterior reason.<sup>517</sup> You can *say*, orally, externally, you do not believe them. But, internally, you still believe them.<sup>518</sup> This wisdom comes from God and leads back to him, although he is not directly grasped in its insights. This uniform wisdom pertains to merely rational judgments – or the bases for judgments.<sup>519</sup> Does it require (in contemporary terminology) *supernatural* revelation? The Seraphic Doctor says of the rules in which this *sapientia uniformis* appears:

...They are rooted in Eternal Light and lead to it, ‘.... Nor should it be said that they are founded on any created light, as for instance in a certain intelligence that enlightens the minds. For since these rules are unrestricted in that they offer themselves to the minds of all, it would follow that a created light could be unrestricted and would be pure act, which is impossible.’<sup>520</sup>

The *sapientia uniformis*, then, is founded directly upon God, in some way, though perhaps not on a particular act of “revelation.” Maybe a *contuitio* of God.<sup>521</sup>

<sup>516</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaemeron*, Coll. 2, nos. 9 & 10; *Works*, transl. deVrink, pp. 26f.

<sup>517</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaemeron* loc. cit., p. 27.

<sup>518</sup> An eerie foreshadowing of post-Cartesian epistemology, clashing with the idyll of the Middle Ages as innocently dogmatic and of Bonaventure as the most innocently dogmatic of all.

<sup>519</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaemeron*, Coll. VII, #1, *Works*, transl. de Vrink, p. 109; Ratzinger, p. 60.

<sup>520</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaemeron*, Coll. 2, n. 10; *Works*, transl. de Vrink, p. 27.

<sup>521</sup> According to St Augustine: “. . . There is something eternal and immutable in the first principles, as in the laws of numbers and in the wisdom according to which we live, for we gather many luminous insights from them. *Consequently it is the immutable Truth of God which we attain in them*, . . . [emphasis added, L. Gl.] F.-J. Thonnard, *A short history of philosophy* (Paris: Desclée, 1956) p. 223; (Thonnard is an Augustinian of the Assumption and respected on St. Augustine). Cf. “{Memory} . . . holds the rational principles and axioms as everlasting things held everlastingly. For memory, when cooperating with reason, could never lose hold on these so completely that, on hearing them, it would fail to approve and agree; . . . This is clearly shown when we say to someone: ‘A proposition is either affirmative or negative,’ or the whole is larger than its parts, or any other axiom which cannot be contradicted by our innermost reason. . . . It appears that the memory holds, present in itself, an unchangeable light, in which it recognizes

Next is the multiform wisdom. St. Bonaventure says, "...Wisdom appears as manifold in the mysteries of divine Scriptures." He quotes Ephesians, "...through the church the manifold wisdom ('multiformis sapientia') of God might now be made known".<sup>522</sup>

The saint attributes to the multiform wisdom the understanding of the spiritual senses of Scripture, "There shines forth a threefold signification in Scriptures, teaching what to believe, what to expect, and what to do." And he shows how the manifold wisdom teaches us the allegorical, anagogical, and tropological senses.<sup>523</sup> Ratzinger tells us: "The 'sapientia multiformis' is extremely important in Bonaventure's theology. It amounts to the grasping of the triple spiritual sense of Holy Writ..."<sup>524</sup>

After the multiform wisdom comes the omniform. It is on the natural level, like the uniform; but it comes from a "revelation." It is elaborated, developed, not the rock-bottom undeniable basis of everything else.

The third, omniform, wisdom, also comes from revelation [inner illumination L. Gl.]. St. Paul tells the Romans God shows, i.e. reveals, evidence of himself, "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them"<sup>525</sup>. This wisdom discovers the footprints or even the image of God the Creator in his creatures. Solomon typifies this wisdom, as do the philosophers. But these run the risk of staying with the creatures and not discovering their source through the clues he has left. Their wisdom then becomes folly.<sup>526</sup>

The fourth kind of wisdom makes a break with the previous increases in "forms," from "uniform" through "multiform" to "omniform." Now suddenly there comes the "sapientia nulliformis." We approach in silence the hiddenness of God. Here, the intellect gives no light. This highest wisdom is most of all the free gift and "revelation" (here, a darkness, a *non*-understanding) of the Lord. This Paul taught only to the perfect, for example, Timothy and Dionysius.<sup>527</sup>

St. Bonaventure holds the manifold wisdom, the allegorical interpretation of the biblical letter, gives way to the nulliform, or formless wisdom, the mystical experience of God. The "revelation" of the last age must take this form of wisdom, the mysticism taught by Dionysius the Areopagite.<sup>528</sup>

the immutable truths. . . .and has God so truly present in itself, that the soul actually grasps Him, . . ." Bonaventure, *The journey of the mind to God*, Chap. 3, no. 2; *The works of Bonaventure* (Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1960), Vol. I, *Mystical opuscula*, p. 29, transl. de Vrink.

<sup>522</sup> 3:10; RSV.

<sup>523</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaemeron*, nos. 13-17, pp. 28-30.

<sup>524</sup> Ratzinger, p. 64.

<sup>525</sup> 1:19; RSV.

<sup>526</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexaemeron*, II, 19, p. 339; Ratzinger, p. 61, cf. n. 9.

<sup>527</sup> Ratzinger, p. 61.

<sup>528</sup> Ratzinger, p. 87.



There are stages of faith. These are also stages of mysticism and of "revelation." St. Bonaventure hopes for a new "revelation," even though the New Testament has a definitive character. But if, at some future time, that mystical penetration were guaranteed to all, that would be indeed a time of a new "revelation".<sup>529</sup>

"Bonaventure believed there was a gradual, historical, progressive development in the understanding of Scripture which was in no way closed," Ratzinger says, in relation to the multiform wisdom<sup>530</sup>, and goes on to propose the precise question: "How did Bonaventure present the relation between Scripture and history?"

Bonaventure applied the doctrine of *rationes seminales* to the interpretation of Scripture. Ratzinger puts it: "Scripture is full of hidden seeds which are developed only in the course of history and therefore constantly allow new insights which would not have been possible for an earlier age".<sup>531</sup> The cardinal further says the relation between Scripture and history can be expressed in two principles: first, that Scripture has grown historically and must be understood historically; second, it is not just a product of past history but also a prediction of the future. While some of the future has become past, part of it remains to come. The whole meaning of Scripture is not yet known to us. A time of complete understanding, of final "revelation" is still to come.<sup>532</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor held that the hoped-for "revelation" was already realized in the two orders of Franciscans and Dominicans.<sup>533</sup> They were not only possessors of scientific knowledge but also a divine sign of the final age. The "revelation" of the final age goes beyond the multiform wisdom, toward the nulliform. Pseudo-Dionysius and St. Francis anticipate the new state of "revelation".<sup>534</sup> The dynamic of Bonaventure's theology of history arises from the separation of these two "revelations," of multiform and nulliform wisdom, and from their future unification.<sup>535</sup> A special historico-theological tension arises from this separation and expectation of re-unification.<sup>536</sup>

The saint experienced a profound inadequacy in all academic learning, especially as he approached the close of his life. He was looking forward to a different, purer revelation [inner illumination. L. Gl.] which could come about only in the last days of this world. St. Francis anticipates this new revelation [inner illumina-

<sup>529</sup> Ratzinger, p. 68.

<sup>530</sup> Ratzinger, p. 75.

<sup>531</sup> Ratzinger, p. 55.

<sup>532</sup> Ratzinger, p. 83f.

<sup>533</sup> Ratzinger, p. 70.

<sup>534</sup> Ratzinger, p. 70.

<sup>535</sup> Ratzinger, p. 62.

<sup>536</sup> Ratzinger, p. 62.

tion. L. Gl.], going beyond discursive thinking to a simpler insight, hidden from the wise and clever, but revealed to little ones.<sup>537</sup> These words from Matthew<sup>538</sup> are not prominent in Bonaventure's commentaries on Scripture but they are emphasized in his interpretations of St. Francis, in whom they are fulfilled in an outstanding way. Francis' disciple sees a necessary relationship between humility and revelation [inner illumination. L. Gl.]. One without humility can receive no knowledge of revelation [inner illumination L. Gl.]. The degrees of the understanding of revelation [inner illumination. L. Gl.] are the degrees of humility. The last age, when the littleness of St. Francis will be the common norm, will be the age of the new and fuller revelation [inner illumination. L. Gl.], differing from the grasp of revelation [inner illumination. L. Gl.] already enjoyed by the Franciscan and Dominican friars in that it will not be academic or discursive, but an simple, inner acquaintance with inner meaning of God's word.<sup>539</sup>

### Patristic context of St. Bonaventure

For St. Bonaventure, the Fathers of the Church provided both objectivity and a degree of subjectivity. His insistence on the importance of personal penetration of Scripture seems to depreciate objective truth, suggesting that he almost discards it in favor of subjectivity, personal insight. For him, only Scripture understood in faith is *Holy* Scripture.<sup>540</sup> But this faith is the common, public faith of the Church. The individual's faith admits him or her to the vital consciousness of the whole Church.<sup>541</sup>

The Christian can come to a true understanding of the Bible only through the faith of the Church and the Fathers of the Church, who witness to its early faith.<sup>542</sup> Here are found the norms of interpretation and the Scripture's true meaning. Here, in the patristic exegesis, are found revelation. Not, as usual with the Seraphic Doctor, subjective and individual "revelation," but an objective, unchangeable reality.<sup>543</sup> But St. Bonaventure believed the Fathers also promote the subjective grasp of Scripture's meaning. We have *Sacred* Scripture only when we read it together with the Fathers.<sup>544</sup>

In the eleventh century, authors granted greater authority to some of the Fathers than they did to certain books of the Bible. This raised questions

<sup>537</sup> Ratzinger, p.71.

<sup>538</sup> 11:25.

<sup>539</sup> Ratzinger, p. 71.

<sup>540</sup> Ratzinger, p. 67.

<sup>541</sup> Ratzinger, p. 68.

<sup>542</sup> Bonaventure, *Hexameron*, XIX; X., p 421; Ratzinger p. 77f.

<sup>543</sup> Ratzinger, p.78.

<sup>544</sup> M. Grabmann, *Die Geschichte der scholastischen Methode*, 2 vol. (Freiburg, 1909-1911 & Darmstadt, 1956) II, p. 210.

about the special position of the Holy Scriptures.<sup>545</sup> The Canon of Scripture, settled centuries before seemed to become an open question again. This, in turn, brought problems about Tradition.<sup>546</sup> Cardinal Ratzinger says this fact has not received much attention.<sup>547</sup>

At least by the end of St. Bonaventure's life, this problem had been solved and, in spite of all his insistence on the indispensable value of the Fathers for the subjective and objective grasp of the Bible, he, like St. Thomas, could follow St. Augustine in his distinction between Scripture and the works of other authors, however learned and holy they were.<sup>548</sup> And, for him, if the Fathers are not to be confused with the canonical books of the Bible, they are still necessary to bring subjective, spiritual revelation to minds and hearts.

The Council of Trent<sup>549</sup> and Pope Pius X<sup>550</sup> also say the writings of the Fathers are a normal way of understanding the Bible. This does not relate to the literal, historical study of the Bible but to the meaning which faith finds there.<sup>551</sup> These church<sup>552</sup> documents relate only to religious teaching.

For one example of the Seraphic Doctor's use of the early Fathers is his reference to St. John of Damascus' labeling the word "Christotokos" Nestorian.<sup>553</sup>

<sup>545</sup> Ratzinger, p.79.

<sup>546</sup> Ratzinger, p.79.

<sup>547</sup> Ratzinger, p.79.

<sup>548</sup> Ratzinger, 80 & 79, n.8. Cf. *Breviloquium*, prol., no. 1; V, 202, and P. Dempsey, *De principis exegeticis S. Bonaventurae*, Rome, 1945. St. Thomas, like St. Bonaventure, and unlike many of his predecessors, clearly distinguished Holy Scripture from the writings of any other authors, however holy and learned. He clearly makes his own the thought of St. Augustine: "Solis eis Scripturarum libris qui canonici appellantur, didici hunc honorem deferre, ut nullum auctorem eorum in scribendo errasse aliquid firmissime credam. Alios autem ita lego, ut quantalibet sanctitate doctrinaque praepolleant, non ideo verum putem, quod ipsi ita senserunt vel scripserunt." St. Aug., *Epist. Ad Hieronymum* 82 (al. 19), c. 1, n. 3: ML 33, 277; quoted in Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.* I, 1, 8, ad 2. ["I have learned to give, only to those books of Scripture which are called canonical, the honor of most firmly believing that no author of theirs makes any mistake in writing. But I read others in such a way that, however outstanding they may be in holiness and learning, I do not therefore think they are true. They themselves thought or wrote the same."]

<sup>549</sup> Denzinger, 785-6; *The Church teaches; documents of the Church in English translation* (Rockford, Ill.: Tan Books, 1973) nos. 97, 98.

<sup>550</sup> Denzinger, 2001ff; *Church teaches* nos.112ff. Cf. *Divino afflante spiritu*, nos. 24, 28, 29.

<sup>551</sup> Bonaventure, *De reduct. Artium*, 5.

<sup>552</sup> Ratzinger, p. 80, n. 10, 204.

<sup>553</sup> St. John Damascene, *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Bk 3, Chap. 12; Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, conclus.; III, p. 11 6.

## The Context of Aquinas

I treat the context of St. Thomas second, not from any lack of respect but because he enjoyed almost all of the theological background of St. Bonaventure, excepting only the teachers he had at the School of the Franciscans at Paris – and he heard them preach and dispute. Although knowing all those texts and teachers, he chose to follow Aristotle as far as a Catholic can and, as the Seraphic Doctor refused to do, follow his teacher Albert the Great in including the Stagiritein theology.

Thomas knew, revered and accepted much of St. Augustine's teaching. Neo-Platonist Augustinianism was all around him and influenced him. Although Gilson disagree, many hold St. Thomas taught, against Aristotle's "tabula rasa," two innate *habitus*, synderesis and the habit of principles. So the context of St. Bonaventure is the more remote context of St. Thomas.

"A number of movements must be singled out for a better understanding of St. Thomas. Among them must be noted the conflict between secular and papal powers, evangelism and the rise of mendicant Orders, spread of the mystical and prophetic doctrines of Abbot Joachim, and the growth of scholasticism in the schools of Western Europe."<sup>554</sup> "He was born just when the influential commentaries of Averroes came into the Latin West, and he was a contemporary of such great thinkers as St. Albert the Great and St. Bonaventure."<sup>555</sup>

The political situation in which Thomas lived and in which his family was involved, "was one of the most confused experiences of the Catholic Church."<sup>556</sup> In response to this state of affairs, he wrote that "the Pope, in virtue of his canonical office, is the spiritual head of the Church and nothing else;..."<sup>557</sup> This varied from the idea of Popes and ecclesiastics of that day, that the business of this world was "their ordinary and natural business."<sup>558</sup>

After living and studying at the Abbey of Monte Cassino for about ten years from the age of five, he went to the University of Naples, a school – then called "studium generale" – founded by Emperor Frederick II to prepare students for imperial service. It was thus a utilitarian university, founded not for pure knowledge but for the service of the state. It was mainly a school of civil and canon law.<sup>559</sup>

<sup>554</sup> J. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino* (Garden City: N.Y., 1974), p.2.

<sup>555</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 2

<sup>556</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 8.

<sup>557</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p.8; Aquinas, *In II Sent.*, d. 44.

<sup>558</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 8.

<sup>559</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p.13.

St. Thomas went to that "studium" to study arts and philosophy. He studied logic, the liberal arts and Aristotle's natural philosophy (probably his metaphysics, too), which had been introduced because of the cosmopolitan culture, Latin, Jewish, and Muslim, at Emperor Frederick's court. At this same time, students at the University of Paris were forbidden the natural philosophy and metaphysics of the Stagirite.<sup>560</sup>

Weisheipl cautions that, "Many biographers imply that it was Albert the Great who introduced Thomas to Aristotelian learning, whereas in fact he was taught the natural philosophy of Aristotle at Naples."<sup>561</sup> Also, "Aquinas was formed in the attitudes of Aristotelian thought through his teacher, Peter of Ireland, before he met Albert the Great."<sup>562</sup>

Weisheipl adds that Thomas, apparently, was taught a certain amount of grammar and rhetoric at the Naples studium. "His sympathy with and expressions of poetry seem to have been implanted during his study of arts." He wrote some fine poetry, especially in the liturgy for the feast of Corpus Christi. "He may have developed his lyrical verse and prose later in life, but the essentials were already established before he left Naples in 1244 to join the Order of Friars Preachers,..."<sup>563</sup> This is of interest in contrast to his most unpoetic, dry, abstract, purely scientific theology. He *could* write emotionally but chose a different path in theology. Bonaventure, of course, expressed emotion and tried to arouse emotion, considering this essential to theology.

### St. Thomas' Dominican Vocation

Living in the heart of Naples, the Dominicans were conspicuous in their white robes and black cloaks. Weisheipl says, "As Thomas passed through his adolescent years at the university, he could not have helped being impressed with their zeal for souls and evangelical poverty."<sup>564</sup> The thirst to save souls was a central characteristic of these friar Preachers. "As poverty characterizes Francis, zeal for souls characterizes Dominic," according to Hinnebusch.<sup>565</sup>

This zeal expressed itself in preaching. Proclaiming the Gospel is the responsibility of bishops. "Never before had this task been taken on as the primary goal of any religious Order."<sup>566</sup> Weisheipl speaks of "the almost revolutionary

<sup>560</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, pp. 13ff.

<sup>561</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p.17.

<sup>562</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p.18.

<sup>563</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 19.

<sup>564</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 20.

<sup>565</sup> W. Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, I, (Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1965), p. 19

<sup>566</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 22.

character of the Order."<sup>567</sup> He adds, "Its mandate of preaching was intended to embrace every type of apostolic preaching – the communication of religious truths in the classroom, in writing, in pulpit and public sermons, and for the salvation of souls generally."<sup>568</sup>

The means to this high goal would include study. For St. Dominic, this was essential. "Just as no previous religious Order in the Church had even embraced preaching as the goal, so none had adopted study as an essential means to the apostolate."<sup>569</sup> Their goal was to contemplate and give to others the fruits of that contemplation – "contemplare et contemplata aliis tradere." This "contemplation," besides that of prayer, also included the contemplation of study. "Young Thomas was quick to perceive that such was the life he wanted."<sup>570</sup>

After his studies in Naples, he joined the Dominicans, at some unknown date. Mandonnet judges he received the habit late in April of 1244.<sup>571</sup> Soon afterward, he was abducted by his brothers, who forcibly detained him for almost a year<sup>572</sup> and, allegedly, arranged an attempted seduction.<sup>573</sup> He rejoined the Order in the summer of 1245.<sup>574</sup> He then went to Paris and was "sent next to Cologne, – in 1245 or 1248 – where he studied under St. Albert the Great."<sup>575</sup> Returning to Paris, he achieved the professorship in theology in 1256, at the age of thirty-one,<sup>576</sup> receiving the title 'Magister in sacra pagina' [Master of the sacred page].<sup>577</sup>

### St. Albert the Great

St. Albert was called "the Great" during his lifetime. He had a breadth of knowledge and a "Germanic thoroughness" that exceeded even that of his famous disciple. He encouraged and increased the knowledge of Aristotle which St. Thomas had gained at Naples. Weisheipl says of Albert, "To him more than

<sup>567</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 23.

<sup>568</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 23.

<sup>569</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 23.

<sup>570</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 25.

<sup>571</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 27.

<sup>572</sup> G. de Frachet, *Vitae Fratrum*, ed. B. Reichert, *Monumenta Ordinis Praedicatorum Historica*, I (Rome, 1897), c. 17, n. 3, p. 201.

<sup>573</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, pp. 28-32.

<sup>574</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 36.

<sup>575</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, pp. 36-39.

<sup>576</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, pp. 96 & 101.

<sup>577</sup> This title, "Master," remained in use until the end of the thirteenth century, when "Doctor in Sacred Theology," began to be used; A. Walz, *Saint Thomas d'Aquin*, ed. & transl. P. Novarina (Louvain: Louvain U Press, 1962), p. 92, fn. 9; M.-D. Chenu, *La théologie comme science au 13e siècle*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Paris, 1957), 99-100.

to any other man, credit is due for having explained and presented Aristotelian thought 'to the Latins'.<sup>578</sup>

Albert had done his study of arts in Padua, where he was introduced to Aristotle. He joined the Preachers there in 1223. He returned to Germany for the novitiate and for his first studies in theology. In 1233, he began to teach that science in German priories. In the early 1240's, he went to the very different, cosmopolitan University of Paris. "At that time Albert seems to have been more concerned about acquiring the new Aristotelian learning" – "his vast encyclopedia of Aristotelian learning" – "than in commenting on Peter Lombard."<sup>579</sup>

After becoming a master in theology, in 1245, he undertook the work of making Aristotle intelligible to Latin scholars. It took twenty years, to cover all the areas of human knowledge. Weisheipl calls it "one of the marvels of medieval scholarship."<sup>580</sup>

"Albert was basically an Aristotelian in philosophy," although he rejected the eternity of the world, the doctrine of Aristotelians of only one human intellect, and Plato's belief that natural beings are based on mathematics. Some of Albert's commentaries reflect Aristotle's views, not his own. "Thus it is difficult to determine exactly what Albert's thoughts in philosophy really were."<sup>581</sup> Also, in his theological writings, he accepted many Platonic teachings from St. Augustine, Avicenna, the *Liber de Causis* and, especially, Pseudo-Denis.<sup>582</sup>

St. Albert saw that Christ was espoused to the Church through the "Fiat" and the faith of Our Lady. She believed the word of the angel: By faith she became the foundation and pillar of the whole Church.<sup>583</sup> St. Thomas went further, saying, as had not been said before, that Mary spoke *in our name*.<sup>584</sup> St. Albert, before Thomas, had said Mary signified the Church by being both virgin and spouse. This was the sacramental reason or mystical reason for her marriage to St. Joseph.<sup>585</sup>

<sup>578</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 39.

<sup>579</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 40.

<sup>580</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, p. 41.

<sup>581</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, pp. 41-43.

<sup>582</sup> Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas*, pp. 42f.

<sup>583</sup> St. Albert the Great, *Commentarium in Lucam*, I, 45, ed. Jammy, vol. X, p. 63; cf. H. Barré, "Marie et l'Eglise du Vénérable Bède à Saint Albert le Grand," *Etudes Mariales; bulletin de la Société Française d'Etudes Mariales* 9 (1951), p. 102. "fide fit totius Ecclesiae fundamentum et columna."

<sup>584</sup> H. Barré, "Marie et l'Eglise," Endnote 389, p. 139.

<sup>585</sup> St. Albert, *In Matth.* I, 18; Ed. my, p. 193. Cf. H. Barré, "Marie et l'Eglise," p. 193.

St. Albert demonstrated that Our Lady possessed, in equal or greater measure, everything received by the members and ministers of the Church.<sup>586</sup> In his *Commentary on St. Luke*, he asks, "What beauty of the Church is not found in Mary?"<sup>587</sup> And he says, "In childbirth, she did not lose human society but indeed was, at that time, constituted mediatrix of God and men."<sup>588</sup>

However, St. Albert never said that the Virgin consented to the angel's message *in our name*, though some say he did. That was left to his disciple, St. Thomas.

#### ST. THOMAS' UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

St. Thomas, though lacking the skills of the contemporary exegete was no naïve fundamentalist. He was acquainted with the biblical science of his day and, to some extent, anticipated ours. For him, Scripture was highest of the "authorities."<sup>589</sup>

Thomas' position on the senses of Scripture is the same in the two questions appended to *Quodlibet VII* and in the *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 1, a. 10. There are, for him, two basic senses in Scripture, the literal and the spiritual. The literal sense is indicated by the words used to express the truth intended by the author, the spiritual sense, by things, persons, and events narrated to signify other things, persons, or events. The literal, or historical, sense is the basis of the spiritual sense and is the only sense valid for theological argumentation. The spiritual sense is not a personal or private interpretation, like the accommodated sense, but is a true sense, explicitly indicated as such in other parts of Scripture. It is an objective sense, intended by the Holy Spirit: for example, Christ as the New Adam, as the antitype of the brazen serpent displayed by Moses in the desert, of the paschal lamb, and so forth.

There are three kinds of spiritual sense, one for right action, two for belief. The moral or tropological sense is directed toward acting correctly and to achieving beatitude. For believing correctly, there are the allegorical, or typical, sense of the Old Testament figures signifying Christ and his Church, and the anagogical sense of the New Testament figures signifying the Heavenly Church both in its head and in its members.<sup>590</sup>

<sup>586</sup> Albert the Great, *Mariale*, q.43, no. 2; ed Jammy, XX, 42.

<sup>587</sup> Albert the Great, *In Luc.*, 2, 16; Ed. Jammy, X, 110; Cf. H. Barré, "Marie et l'Eglise," p. 90.

<sup>588</sup> Albert the Great, *Mariale*, q. 31, no. 4; Ed. Jammy, vol. XX, p. 34.

<sup>589</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol* II-II, q 171, a. 6 c.

<sup>590</sup> J. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino: His Life, Thought, and Work*, Garden City: Doubleday, 1974, 106-7.



He rejected the theory that nothing in the Old Testament refers expressly to Christ, that only later was the Old Testament adapted to Christ. Thomas follows the rule given by St. Jerome in his commentary on Ezechiel, that all actions recorded in the Old Testament are to be expounded in such a way that they prefigure something of Christ or his Church. He does not deny that the Hebrew Scriptures have a literal sense pertaining to the people and events in Jewish history but he concentrates on the spiritual sense, allegorical or anagogical, in which the events of the Old Testament signify Christ or his Church on earth or in heaven. For him, the spiritual sense of Hebrew Scripture is more relevant than the literal, in Christian worship and in the personal lives of Christians.<sup>591</sup>

The meaning intended by the four senses of Scripture, one literal and three spiritual, is always clear. The historical or literal sense is exactly what the human and divine authors intended by the narration. The spiritual sense, founded on the literal, and explicitly claimed as such by a sacred author or tradition, refers to events and persons of a later age. It is a truth, distinct from the literal truth. Sometimes, a passage of Scripture contains all four senses, for instance, the life of Christ. The historical Jesus is the literal sense. His historical body refers, in the allegorical sense, to his Mystical Body, the Church. The moral sense shows us his actions as examples for our own. And the anagogical sense promises us, in Christ, our own eternal glory.<sup>592</sup>

St. Thomas had a relatively sophisticated approach to the Bible. We may be better in some ways today but we cannot reject his views as having nothing to teach us.

#### Patristic Elements in the Context of St. Thomas

The Angelic Doctor revered Scripture as the Word of God and thus, the supreme source of theological truth and the heart of the method in which he was formed, the Scholastic method. But, good Catholic that he was, he understood the Bible as the Church does and that meant, as the Fathers did,<sup>593</sup> for the Fathers, ancient, orthodox, and holy are witnesses to the faith of the early Church.<sup>594</sup> They did say some things not connected to the faith, which need not be believed. But he often saw in their work the guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>595</sup> He

<sup>591</sup> Weisheipl, *op. cit.*, 306

<sup>592</sup> Weisheipl, 107

<sup>593</sup> J. Moudry, *The influence of the patristic "auctoritates" of St. Thomas Aquinas on the doctrine of penance in the Summa Theologiae, III a, Qq.84-90* (Rome: Officium Libri Cattolici, 1962), p. 17.

<sup>594</sup> Aquinas, *Quodl.*, XII, q. 17; cf. Principe, "Interpretation," 111

<sup>595</sup> Aquinas, *Quodl.*, XX, q.17

had a great desire for the original works of the Fathers, especially of St. Augustine, although he often had to use secondary collections like the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard and the *Decree* of Gratian.<sup>596</sup>

St. Augustine was for him, as for all the Scholastics, the greatest of the Fathers.<sup>597</sup> Like them, he quoted him as often as he could.<sup>598</sup> He also used the Greek Fathers and always tried to learn more about all the patristic sources.<sup>599</sup> He sometimes put a text in the *sed contra* position as an authoritative justification for his position and then the article developed the position independently of that text.<sup>600</sup> Of such texts, St. Thomas may have been less critical but when he was concerned directly with the meaning of the text itself, he showed a sophisticated and skillful knowledge of hermeneutical method.<sup>601</sup>

St. Thomas understood the difficulties of translation. Slavish, word-for-word translation would not be acceptable.<sup>602</sup> He emphasized meaning and context. He had care for the true, original text, its contextual meaning, and for the author's usage and mentality.<sup>603</sup>

He knew of the development of doctrine, that later Fathers spoke more carefully and precisely than earlier ones.<sup>604</sup> Statements of the earlier Fathers might even turn out to be false and need to be "interpreted reverently,"<sup>605</sup> according to the analogy of faith, the Catholic belief in the harmony of one part of Scripture with another and with the doctrine of the Church, bringing the cruder statement of the earlier Father into agreement with the later, more developed doctrine of the Church. He studied the historical background of each Father, distinguishing the Platonists from Aristotelians<sup>606</sup> and seeking out the particular, individual intention of each author.<sup>607</sup> Besides his respect for the Fathers, he showed great skill in finding their real meaning.<sup>608</sup>

<sup>596</sup> Moudry, 78-9

<sup>597</sup> Moudry, 83.

<sup>598</sup> J-P. Torrell, *Saint Thomas d'Aquin: maître spirituel* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, a.s.)

<sup>599</sup> Pinckaers, *Sources*, p. 4 of chapter, "Sources of St. Thomas."

<sup>600</sup> Moudry, 93-4.

<sup>601</sup> W. Principe, "Thomas Aquinas' principles for the interpretation of patristic studies." *Studies in medieval culture*, 8 & 9, ed. J. Sommerfeldt, 1976, p. 116.

<sup>602</sup> *Graecorum*, XL, A 71, 66-72; cf. Principe, W. "Thomas Aquinas' principles for the interpretation of patristic studies." *Studies in medieval culture*, 8 & 9, ed. J. Sommerfeldt, 1976, p.113.

<sup>603</sup> Principe, 113.

<sup>604</sup> Principe, 114.

<sup>605</sup> *Graecorum*, XL, A 71, 39-44; Principe 114-5.

<sup>606</sup> *II Sent.*, d. 14, q. 1, a. 2

<sup>607</sup> *Comment. . . . De Divin. Nom.*; cf. Principe.

<sup>608</sup> Principe, 115-6

As an example of his Mariological employment of the Fathers, he uses St. Jerome<sup>609</sup> to establish that St. Joseph was a virgin and the "brothers of the Lord" were not, as some claimed, his children by an earlier marriage.<sup>610</sup> St. Augustine supplies his proof that Our Lady and St. Joseph were truly married<sup>611</sup> and that Mary remained a virgin through the birth of Christ<sup>612</sup>

St. Thomas' theology and Mariology were founded on a deep understanding of the best available sources and was profoundly in harmony with the Catholic Faith.

#### 4. A Shared Context: Twelfth Century Mariology

Scholastic theology in this century said little or nothing about Our Lady. Also, P. Edward D. O'Connor tells us, "Their theological equipment was so primitive that we may be dismayed at the false problems which bedeviled them."<sup>613</sup> But still they set up the main Mariological questions which theologians would, for many years, feel obliged to discuss, not excepting even St. Thomas.<sup>614</sup>

The twelfth century was a time of radical beginning in Mariology. Some doctrines, such as the Most Holy Trinity, the Hypostatic union, and grace, had been well developed by the Fathers of the Church. Twelfth century scholastics had only to systematize them, by digging out basic principles and finding the relations among them. Mariology was different. Her perpetual virginity had been clearly expounded by the Fathers, especially St. Ambrose and St. Jerome. Also, the title "Mother of God" was fully defined but it implied to the twelfth century little more than wonder that the immeasurable God had been confined in her womb. Their concept of her holiness was rudimentary. These theologians had to begin from very, very little, even discovering problems.<sup>615</sup>

Early scholasticism had no "Tractatus de Virgine Maria." She was mentioned, by the way, in some questions of Christology. Also, the validity of her marriage to St. Joseph was discussed in "De matrimonio." One point of Christology involving Mary was the Virgin Birth. Another, more challenging and

<sup>609</sup> Aquinas, III, 28, 3, ad 5.

<sup>610</sup> Jerome, *Adv. Helvidium*, no. 19

<sup>611</sup> Cap. I.

<sup>612</sup> Aquinas, III, 28, 2, c. Augustine, *In Natali Domini*, sermo 5

<sup>613</sup> E. O'Connor, "The Origin of Scholastic Mariology," *De cultu mariano saeculis XII-XV*, vol. IV., *De cultu mariano apud scriptores ecclesiasticos saec. XII-XIII, Acta congressus Mariologici-Mariani internationalis Romae anno 1975 celebrati* (Rome: Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis, 1980), p.1.

<sup>614</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," p. 1 and n. 2.

<sup>615</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," p. 2.

more fruitful was how could Christ have risen sinless from the sinful mass of humanity.<sup>616</sup> (Remember they believed Our Lady had been conceived with original sin. The first written work, known to us, on her Immaculate Conception was Eadmer's *Tractatus de Conceptione S. Mariae*, around 1124 A.D.<sup>617</sup>) In the first three quarters of the twelfth century – the period dealt with by Edward O'Connor – few theologians seem even to have heard of any debate over an Immaculate Conception. Except, of course, that of Christ. St. Anselm says:

For even though (Christ's) conception was pure and free from any sin of carnal delectation, still the virgin from whom this man was taken was conceived "in iniquity," and "in sin" her "mother conceived" her. She was born with original sin, for she too sinned in Adam, "in whom all have sinned,"<sup>618</sup>

The problem, then, was "Why did not Mary transmit original sin to her child, like all other parents?"

The theology of the early twelfth century saw original sin as a condition of human flesh, and passed along in the act of generation. (St. Anselm had disagreed<sup>619</sup> to slight avail before the following century.) Christ's human flesh was born, generated, from Mary, from human flesh. How could it not be sinful? This view was reinforced by the common doctrine that the concupiscence of the parents in the reproductive act was sinful and caused original sin in the child conceived and by the somewhat received opinion that this concupiscence had an efficient causality in the generation of the offspring.

The Mariology of the twelfth century developed around these two key points: the virgin birth and Christ's freedom from sin. For some authors, the virgin birth, guaranteed by *de fide* definition, solved the difficulty of sinlessness, a problem still requiring an answer, and the main focus of Mariologists.<sup>620</sup> St. Anselm wrote little on Mary. Graef tells us most of the Marian works attributed to him are spurious. But, she says, "His teaching on her nevertheless

<sup>616</sup> St. Anselm of Canterbury, *Cur Deus homo*, II, XVI; *Opera Omnia*, II, ed. F. Schmitt (Edinburgh: 1946), pp. 18-24.

<sup>617</sup> Eadmer, *Tractatus de conceptione s. Mariae*, eds. H. Thurston and T. Slater (Herder, Freiburg im Breisgau: 1904).

<sup>618</sup> Anselm, *Cur Deus homo*, II, XVI, Schmitt, p. 116; quotations from Psalm 52:5 (Vulgate, Ps. 50, 7) *Nam licet ipsa hominis eiusdem conceptio munda sit et absque carnalis delectationis peccato, virgo tamen ipsa unde assumptus est, "in iniquitatibus" concepta est, "et in peccatis concepit" eam "mater" eius, et cum originali peccato nata est, quoniam et ipsa in Adam peccavit, "in quo omnes peccaverunt."* Transl. P. Edward O'Connor, "Origin," p. 3.

<sup>619</sup> Anselm, *De conceptu virginali et de originali peccato*, *Opera Omnia*, Vol. II, ed. F. Schmitt (Edinburgh: 1946).

<sup>620</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," pp. 4f.

had an enormous influence on medieval Mariology.<sup>621</sup> In chapter sixteen of *Cur Deus Homo*, he said Mary, like many others before Christ, has been purified from original sin by her faith in the future redeeming death of her Son and this purity – ultimately derived from Christ – shielded him from inheriting original sin. (He offered no explanation of why all the children of these other purified parents were not conceived without sin.)<sup>622</sup> His next work, *De conceptu virginali*, offered a different theory. Here, he said original sin is handed on by the action of human reproductive powers. In Christ's conception, humanity (Mary) provided the matter for his body but did not produce or generate it. It was produced by divine action. So the sin was not transmitted.<sup>623</sup>

Anselm has, therefore, precisely reversed his former position. In the *Cur Deus homo*, Mary's *sinlessness* is what preserved Christ from original sin, while her virginity was only a fitting accompaniment. In the *De conceptu virginali* it is the *virginity* that protects Christ's conception, and the mother's purity that is a fitting accompaniment.<sup>624</sup>

In this treatise on the virginal conception, St. Anselm has a sentence that is quoted in the bull *Ineffabilis*, defining the Immaculate Conception, though he opposed that doctrine.<sup>625</sup> "It was fitting that this Virgin should shine with a degree of purity that which no greater can be imagined apart from God."<sup>626</sup> He says nothing about coredeption, mediation, or the Assumption. He speaks only of Mary's virginity and holiness, in direct relevance to the Divine Maternity.<sup>627</sup>

Still, Graef says;

In Anselm, some of the principal trends of medieval Marian doctrine and devotion are already united: a scholastic argumentation working out the consequences of Mary's divine motherhood in a strict parallelism between it and the fatherhood of God, which leads necessarily to her share in Christ's work of redemption ("both salvation and damnation depend on the will of the good Brother and the merciful Mother"), and so to her being also the mother of men, whose prayers are as necessary to our salvation as the Incarnation itself. Besides, Mary appears not only as the Mother of God, but also as the beloved beautiful Lady of her spiritual knight who places himself under her protection...<sup>628</sup>

<sup>621</sup> Graef, *Mary*, Vol. I, p. 210.

<sup>622</sup> Anselm, *Cur Deus homo*, vol. II, chap. 16; Schmitt, vol. II, p. 122.

<sup>623</sup> Anselm, *De concept. Virg.*, chap. 18; Schmitt, vol. II, p. 159.

<sup>624</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," p. 7.

<sup>625</sup> Graef, *Mary*, Vol. I, p. 210f.

<sup>626</sup> Anselm, *De concept. Virg.* chap. 18; Schmitt, vol. II.

<sup>627</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," p. 7.

<sup>628</sup> Graef, *Mary*, Vol. I, p. 215.

Eadmer, a close associate of St. Anselm,<sup>629</sup> wrote *Tractatus de conceptione sanctae Mariae*,<sup>630</sup> which Graef calls, "the first detailed exposition of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception."<sup>631</sup> She says of it:

As Bruder points out, "Eadmer's defense of the Immaculate Conception may well have been written to justify the reintroduction of the feast of Our Lady in the Abbey of Saint Edmund's, Bury, by its newly appointed abbot, Anselm, the nephew of our saint."<sup>632</sup> He further draws attention to Anselm of Bury's links with the Greek monks of St. Sabas, near Jerusalem, who had fled to Rome when Palestine was invaded by the Saracens. St. Sabas, the monastery of John of Damascus, had celebrated the feast of Mary's conception for centuries, and its monks continued to do so when they came to Rome. There Anselm had been abbot before he was transferred to Bury, and as such he carried on the Greek tradition which he then reintroduced in England, where the feast had been celebrated by the Saxons but had been abolished after the Norman invasion of England.<sup>633</sup>

Graef also mentions about Eadmer that he was "a Saxon by birth – a nationality which ...was not without influence on his doctrinal beliefs."<sup>634</sup>

Graef says, "Eadmer bases his belief on the fact that Christ came to save sinners and on Mary's co-operation in this: 'She, who was created to be the palace of the Redeemer of sinners, was therefore free from the servitude of all sin.'<sup>635</sup>

Rupert of Deutz interpreted the entire Song of Songs with a Marian meaning.<sup>636</sup> He seems to be the first to do this, although separate verses have had a Marian interpretation from very early times.<sup>637</sup> The reason for this new understanding may have been the connection of reading from the Song with the feasts of the Assumption and the Nativity of Our Lady.<sup>638</sup>

Abelard defended the bodily Assumption of Our Lady and delivered a sermon on it.<sup>639</sup> He said Mary possessed all the gifts of the Church.<sup>640</sup>

The anonymous *Sententiae divinitatis*, composed under the influence of Gilbertus Porretanus, around 1150, says Mary's virginity was fitting symbol of the

<sup>629</sup> O'Carroll, *Theotokos*, "Eadmer," p. 125.

<sup>630</sup> PL 159. Eds. H. Thurston and T. Slater (Freiburg im Breisgau: 1939).

<sup>631</sup> Graef, *Mary*, Vol. I, p. 218.

<sup>632</sup> J. Bruder, *The Mariology of St. Anselm of Canterbury* (Dayton: 1939), pp. 46f.

<sup>633</sup> Graef, *Mary*, Vol. I, p. 218.

<sup>634</sup> Graef, *Mary*, Vol. I, p. 215.

<sup>635</sup> Graef, *Mary*, Vol. I, p.219; Eadmer, *Tract. De concept. s. Mariae*, 9, 305b.

<sup>636</sup> PL 168, pp. 837-962.

<sup>637</sup> Graef, *Mary*, Vol. I, pp. 226f.

<sup>638</sup> J. Beumer, "Die marianische Deutung des Hohen Liedes in der Frühscholastik," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 76 (1954), pp. 411-439.

<sup>639</sup> PL, 178, pp. 539-547; Ed. V Cousins (1836), vol. I, pp. 520-528.

<sup>640</sup> Abelard, PL, 178, p. 540B.

divine unity, as corruption was of multiplicity, and of the Church as virginal spouse of Christ. The sinlessness of Christ came from the Holy Spirit's cleansing of that particle of Mary's flesh that was to be the body of Christ.<sup>641</sup> O'Connor, mentioning that this idea was common among twelfth-century theologians, calls it "...A great regression as compared with Anselm's later doctrine." The *Sententiae* mentions, as heretical, the opinion that a particle of Adam's flesh was preserved from the stain of his sin and passed down through many generations, until assumed by the Word in Mary's womb.<sup>642</sup>

William of Champeaux, in *Sententiae divinae paginae*, treats of the preservation of Christ's body from sin, and explains it by both the virginal conception and the cleansing action of Christ's divinity when the human nature was joined to it.<sup>643</sup>

Robert Pullus said the virginal conception preserved Christ from original sin. But, since it was debated at that time whether intercourse could occur without sin, he added another reason for avoiding a human father: this would have involved Jesus having, unfittingly, two fathers, one human, one divine. Regarding the often held opinion that the Incarnation took place, not at the conception, but at the animation, forty-six days later, when the human soul was commonly thought to enter the foetus, Robert pointed out that implies that Mary did *not* conceive *God* and could not, therefore be called "Mother of God."<sup>644</sup>

Amadeus of Lausanne expresses emotion in his Marian writing in a way Graef calls "almost embarrassing. He describes the sufferings of Our Lady on Calvary most graphically but, because of the teaching of St. Ambrose, says she did not cry. Graef calls this "an interesting instance of the division of the medieval theologian between his natural feelings and his devotion to the authority of the Fathers."<sup>645</sup>

Hugh of St. Victor holds the flesh of Christ was purified at the moment of the Incarnation by the same grace as that which frees every Christian from sin. He held that Mary was subject to sin, as is clear from his response to those who held a sinless particle of Adam's body was handed down through the generations – this "sinless particle" theory was convenient for explaining how Christ

<sup>641</sup> *Sententiae divinitatis*. Anon. Ed. B. Geyer. *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters*, VII, 1909; tr. IV, # 5, p. 103.

<sup>642</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," p. 10.

<sup>643</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," p. 11. William of Champeaux, *Sententiae divinae paginae*, ed. F. Bliemetzrieder, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters*, XVIII (1919), 2, p. 39.

<sup>644</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," pp. 12f.

<sup>645</sup> Graef, *Mary*, vol. 1, p. 246.

was not tithed in the loins of Abraham just as Levi was. Hugh said Catholic faith teaches that Christ, born of and for sinners, took sinless flesh from sinful flesh. Hugh explains the preservation of Christ from original sin by the virginal conception. Once cleansed of sin, however, Mary surpassed all others in holiness, but in a "...holiness of one delivered, not preserved from sin."<sup>646</sup> On the virginal conception, Hugh says:

"...It is the love of man and woman for each other that draws from them that which forms the seed from which the child will develop. He adds that a woman is said to conceive of a man ("a viro concipere") not only because she receives something deriving from his flesh, but also because her own contribution is provided through love of him: "per amorem viri ministratur."

Not only the operation of the Holy Spirit, Hugh says, but also Mary's love for that Spirit, brought about the Incarnation.<sup>647</sup>

The *Summa Sententiarum*, written by a disciple of Hugh, introduces the distinction between sin, "peccatum," and the "tinder of sin," "fomes peccati." At the Incarnation, when Jesus's flesh was separated from Mary's, his flesh was purified by the Holy Spirit from both. Mary, at that same moment, was wholly cleansed from sin, but the "fomes" remained in her, though greatly weakened.

Mariam vero totam prorsus a peccato, sed non a fomite peccati mundavit, quem tamen sic debilitavit, ut postea non peccasse credatur.<sup>648</sup> [Mary herself was wholly purified of sin by the Holy Spirit, but not of the "fomes peccati;" the latter, however, was so weakened that it is believed that Mary never sinned thereafter.<sup>649</sup>

About this sentence of the *Summa Sententiarum*, O'Connor makes the strong statement:

This brief remark merits perhaps to be called the earliest properly Mariological thesis in the history of scholasticism. It is the first assertion that bears properly on Mary in herself, rather than in so far as she is involved in a Christological question. The author has already answered his question about the purification of Christ's flesh, but he feels the need to add a remark about the purification of His mother.

If this is the first Mariological thesis of scholasticism, it must surely be the first in any theology. The definition of "Theotokos" at the Council of Ephesus, though referring to Our Lady was really the answer to a Christological con-

<sup>646</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," pp. 14ff.

<sup>647</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," pp. 23f.

<sup>648</sup> *Summa Sententiarum*, PL 176, 73A.

<sup>649</sup> Transl., O'Connor, "Origin," p. 18.



troversy, emphasizing the unity of Christ. "Though clearly Christological, the debate came to a head on the word "Theotokos" as a true title for Our Lady."<sup>650</sup>

O'Connor says Hugh of St. Victor's *De sacramentis Christianae fidei* was written between 1136 and 1141 and the *Summa Sententiarum* was written "not long after Hugh's *De Sacramentis*. St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure both died in the year 1274. That means their Mariologies originated within years of the very first Mariological sentence ever written. This means they were very early pioneers and we ought to presume their Mariology would be primitive indeed. Of course, it is, compared to the wealth of Mariology we now take for granted. And we can see their devotional works reaching out ahead of their truly academic Marian theology. In view of the very recent start of academic Mariology, we ought to admire enthusiastically the great work they did.

O'Connor finally evaluates this significant work thus:

In summary, the *Summa Sententiarum* explains Christ's sinlessness by a cleansing brought about by the Holy Spirit. It does not treat Mary's virginal motherhood, except for an implicit appeal to it to resolve the naïve dilemma about the tithing. The real significance of the work lies in the more direct attention it gives to Mary, and especially in its assertion of a total purification of Mary by the Holy Spirit at the Annunciation.

He also mentions that the work is noteworthy "for the important texts of St. Augustine which it brings into the currents of theological discussion."<sup>651</sup>

Peter Lombard's *Book of Sentences* appeared around the middle of the twelfth century. He considers the same two questions as the *Summa Sententiarum*, the purification of Christ's flesh and his being not tithed in the loins of Abraham. He follows the *Summa* closely here as in many other places although he gives much more attention to Mary's virginal motherhood than the *Summa* did. The Lombard developed doctrine to some small extent and, more importantly, provided texts previously unknown to the Latin West. The biggest contribution was a selection from St. John Damascene's *De Fide Orthodoxa*, previously unknown to Latin theologians. The amount presented by Peter was limited but, "nevertheless, John Damascene did enter onto the scene of Latin theology thanks to this modest introduction by Peter Lombard, and his eventual influence in Mariology would be considerable."<sup>652</sup>

Peter of Poitiers taught that Our Lady was purified of all sin before her birth. The proof of this is that the Church celebrates her nativity. This first purification, while removing all sin, left the "fomes peccati," the "tinder of sin,"

<sup>650</sup> "Cyril of Alexandria, St." M. O'Carroll, *Theotokos; a theological encyclopedia of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. Wilmington, Del.: 1982.

<sup>651</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," p. 19 and n. 57.

<sup>652</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," p. 20.

and left her able to sin. A second purification at the time of the Annunciation wiped out the tinder entirely. After this, she could not sin.<sup>653</sup> He raised some other original questions.

However, it is not these slight innovations, but Peter's doctrine on Mary's purification before her birth which was his characteristic contribution. It would soon be accepted universally, providing the frame in which the thirteenth century would debate the question of the Immaculate Conception.<sup>654</sup>

A noteworthy development occurred in the first two-thirds of the twelfth century with regard to the preservation of Christ from the original sin then believed to have been in Mary. O'Connor calls it "a remarkable and almost rectilinear development..." St. Anselm of Canterbury said it was due to Mary's purification through her faith, also received by other Old Testament saints. Abandoning this, he said Christ was sinless because of his virginal conception. At first, this was widely accepted. But it was opposed by the theory of a purification of the flesh assumed by Christ, whether by the Holy Spirit, by grace, or, apparently, by the divinity of Christ. The *Summa Sententiarum* taught a purification, not only of the particle of flesh which Christ assumed, but of Mary's whole person. Peter of Poitiers spoke of *two* purifications of Mary, one before birth and a final one at the Annunciation

The concept of the virgin birth did not enjoy such development. But Simon of Tournai differed with many authors who spoke of a vow of virginity in relation to Mary. Simon distinguished between a vow and a "propositum," saying she had only an intention, "propositum" of remaining a virgin.<sup>655</sup>

##### 5. Theological or Purely Philosophical Differences?

Part One has discussed the nature of the Doctors' theologies, demonstrative or affective, whether they hold that theology is the only science or that there are other sciences, distinct from and subordinate to theology, how they use Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church in the construction of their theologies, whether created essences (exemplarism) and created understanding (illumination) depend on the Second Person of the Most Blessed Trinity or not. It seems to me the inquiry is substantively theological. True, it is not perfectly "philosophierein [cleansed of all philosophy]. Philosophical terms and propositions do occur. But, in my opinion, and the opinion at least of medieval theologians, they are present in every theology.

<sup>653</sup> Petri Pictaviensis, *Libri V Sententiarum*, lib. IV, c. VII; PL 211, p. 1164A.

<sup>654</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," p. 22.

<sup>655</sup> O'Connor, "Origin," p. 23.

## 6. *Proof of Part One of the Thesis*

The first part of the thesis states the two Doctors have very different theologies, in general. It has been shown that St. Bonaventure, following the Greek Fathers relates creatures to the Father, through the exemplary Word. St. Thomas, following St. Augustine, relates creatures to the divine nature. St. Bonaventure accepts Aristotle grudgingly, St. Thomas wholeheartedly. Bonaventure's theology is affective, St. Thomas's is demonstrative. Bonaventure holds all things are intelligible only in Christ, thus there is really only one science, theology, which includes all knowledge. St. Thomas holds that creatures have some, though limited, intelligibility in themselves. For him, theology is finite, is one science among many, not the one universal science, absorbing all others. Other things are studied by other, distinct sciences. In analogy, besides the analogies of proportion, proportionality, and attribution, on which they agree, at least partly, St. Bonaventure relies heavily on the analogies of shadow, vestige and image, of which St. Thomas says nothing. For the Franciscan, exemplarism and illumination are central to his theology. While the Dominican Doctor believes in these, they do not have the all-inclusive importance that Bonaventure gives them. Finally, St. Thomas is interested primarily in the objective, literal sense of Scripture. St. Bonaventure seeks a "revelation" (personal understanding) beyond the letter, for subjective growth in wisdom. These suffice to establish a difference between their theologies in general and to prove the first part of the thesis. Let the words of Gilson close this first part of the dissertation:

...St. Bonaventure's doctrine marks for us the culminating point of Christian mysticism and constitutes the completest synthesis it has ever achieved. Thus it must be clear that it can never be properly comparable in any point with the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas. The attempts sometimes made by their interpreters to transform their fundamental agreement into an identity of content are, from the start, futile and doomed to fail. For it is clear that since the two doctrines are ordered from different starting points, they will never envisage the same problems in the same aspect, and therefore one will never answer the precise question that the other asks.<sup>656</sup>

<sup>656</sup> Gilson, *Phil. of Bonaventure*, pp. 448f.

## PART TWO

### THE MARIOLOGY OF ST. THOMAS AND ST. BONAVENTURE

#### Introduction

In Part One, it was shown that St. Thomas' and St. Bonaventure's theologies are very different. Now, Part Two will demonstrate that their Mariologies are very much alike. Some differences, yes, important to careful scholars, but small, compared to the overall similarities. There are four chapters in Part Two, explaining their teachings on, first, the predestination and preparation of Our Lady, second, her consent, third, her conceiving and bearing the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, and, fourth, the permanent relation of motherhood to Our Lord and some of the corollaries of that relation.

The Introduction to Part One will have three parts:

I. Concept of "Theotokos," i.e. "Mother of God"

II. St. Thomas' view of Mary & Mariology

III. St. Bonaventure's view of Mary & Mariology

#### *Concept of "Theotokos," i.e. "Mother of God"*

What do Catholics in general—and this dissertation in particular—mean by "Mother of God?" May we at least set aside the grotesque concepts that she is the cause of Christ's divinity or, in some way, greater than, or equal to, God? *Scientibus loquor*. For further refinements, let us consult some contemporary authorities:

Are these terms equivalent? Fr. Emanon R. Carroll, O. Carm. says they are translations:

...The Church's confession of Mary as *theotokos* (sic), as Mother of God in ordinary Catholic translation, and sometimes, more accurately, though a bit clumsily to my Catholic ear, as "God-bearer," an Anglican translation, or somewhat more elegantly and clearly, "Mother of God incarnate."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E. Carroll, "Mary, the Mother of Jesus, a Catholic View," *Our Lady's Digest*, Nov.- Dec., 1976, p. 79.

George Tavard sees some differences. He entitled his book, "The Forthbringer of God."<sup>2</sup>

The expression, "Forthbringer of God," is not common in Catholic piety. But it corresponds more strictly than the familiar "Mother of God" to the Greek term, *Theotocos* (*sic*),<sup>3</sup> and to the Latin expressions which translate it, *Dei Genetrix* and *Deipara*. It evokes exactly the aspect of the divine motherhood which is the most emphasized by Bonaventure:<sup>4</sup> in her task as channel of the Incarnation, Mary brought forth to us the Word of God incarnate.<sup>5</sup>

Jaroslav Pelikan painstakingly translates *Theotokos* as "The one who gave birth to the one who is God."<sup>6</sup>

The title "Mother" is, among us, rightly laden with emotion. Freud validated that, teaching that our mothers form our emotional characteristics, what is called "personality" today (not in the ages of Scholasticism). Much tender emotion is attributed to Mary and also an active relation to each one of us. Sts. Thomas and Bonaventure express little of this in their theological writings. "Mary gave birth to Jesus the Savior," is the beginning and end of their Mariology. She was made holy and kept from all personal sin (although not, they hold, from *original* sin!). And she mediated all grace by giving birth to Jesus. Personal relationship with each of us, a tender, profoundly formative relation to her Son, will be left to later Mariologists. This "mere birth-giver" attitude reminds us of contemporary Protestants. But our two Doctors have absolutely no animosity toward Our Lady. They are less developed but developing Catholics.

With all respect to wiser scholars, to Tavard and Pelikan, and with the limits indicated in the paragraph above, I shall use "Mother of God" as a contemporary translation of *Theotokos*.

Neither Thomas nor Bonaventure originated the term or the concept of "Mother of God." The title "Theotokos,"<sup>7</sup> was popular, even universal among Christians about a millennium before the time they shared. Pelikan insists there

<sup>2</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Tavard spells "Theotocos" with a "c," *once*. *Forthbringer*, p. viii. Thereafter, he uses "Forthbringer."

<sup>4</sup> St. Thomas also centered his Marian thought on her bringing the Savior to us. "He really does not have a separate tract on Our Lady, but inserts the treatment of her mainly into his Christological section, specifically on Christ's coming into the world." Jelly, *Madonna* (Huntington, Ind.: Our Sunday Visitor, 1986), p. 131. For the Angelic Doctor, "that was her very role in salvation history, the woman who bridged the Old and New Covenants and stood at the beginning of her Son's redemptive activity. The work of our salvation began with the virginal conception of Christ in his mother's womb." *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>5</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p., viii.

<sup>6</sup> J. Pelikan, *Mary through the centuries: her place in the history of culture* (Yale U. P.: New Haven, 1996), p. 57.

<sup>7</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*.

is "no altogether incontestable evidence that it was used before the fourth century," in spite of Newman's claim that "the title *Theotokos* or Mother of God was familiar to Christians from primitive times." Pelikan does admit, "From various evidence, ...it seems reasonable to conclude that the title already enjoyed widespread acceptance in the piety of the faithful at Alexandria and beyond."<sup>8</sup> So: we have documentary proof for sixteen hundred and fifty years, "reasonable evidence" for more.

Dominican Father Frederick M. Jelly says of this venerable title:

...The Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431) ...solemnly declared Mary to be the *Theotokos*. As early as the first part of the third century, the Roman theologian Hippolytus was already calling her by this name.<sup>9</sup> ...In my opinion we have yet to come up with a better title for Mary which would express more aptly and with such succinctness the revealing word of God about Mary's predestined place in salvation history.<sup>10</sup>

Fr. Jelly also says this word has "deep roots in the biblical revelation and faith-consciousness of the ancient Church," and is "the main marian idea for our times."<sup>11</sup>

Pelikan insists the term is of Christian origin, arising from the people's devotion to the mother of the divine Savior. The history does not in any direct way corroborate the facile modern theories about the "mother goddesses" of Graeco-Roman paganism and their supposed significance for the development of Christian Mariology.<sup>12</sup>

#### *"Theotokos," "Mother of God": Foundational Term*

Father Jelly holds that *Theotokos*, properly, historically understood, is the term which can best clarify the meaning of Our Lady's motherhood.<sup>13</sup> And, beyond that, it can give a foundation to our marian theology, as *Dei Genetrix* did for St. Thomas' and St. Bonaventure's. Canon René Laurentin also holds the centrality of *Theotokos*:

This ...is the position of the Eastern Churches. For them *Theotokos* is enough. Sometimes, even, they seem to think that the additions made to this by the Latins have done nothing but diminish Mary's true nature. It would be a mistake to imagine that they reduce her to her simplest expression. What they are doing is

<sup>8</sup> Pelikan, *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> H. Rahner, *Our Lady and the Church* (New York, 1961), p. 37.

<sup>10</sup> Jelly, "The concrete meaning of Mary's motherhood," *Mary and ecumenism*, 1981, p.30.

<sup>11</sup> Jelly, "Concrete meaning," p. 30.

<sup>12</sup> Pelikan, p. 57f. He refers (endnote 17, Chap. 4) to A. Toynbee, *A study of history*, 12 vols. (Oxford, Oxford U P, 1934-1961), 7-B:717.

<sup>13</sup> Jelly, "Concrete meaning," p. 32.

seeing her at her highest; there they pitch their tent. The best representatives of this tradition never seem to lose sight of the fact that Mary's virginity, conception in holiness and assumption, as well as her present relationship with mankind are precisely the virginity, sanctity, conception and assumption of the *Theotokos*...<sup>14</sup>

"Theotokos" is not foundational in the sense of being a premise for logically concluding to all the rest of mariology. "Theotokos" is a concept of primary importance. And Mariology is a rational study. We ought not to understand, though, as a premise from which all the rest of Marian theology can be deduced. Euclidean geometry states a few axioms and postulates and derives the whole science from these. Such logical rigor commands our respect and even, to some extent, the supreme compliment of our imitation. But marian theology—theology in general—deals with matters less clear to our finite intellects and concerning which we humans enjoy less certainty. Therefore, in systematizing our faith concerning Our Lady, we might expect less clarity, propose less rigor, and proceed with more caution.<sup>15</sup>

Fr. Jelly warns us against seeking one point of marian theology as a first premise from which all the rest can be rationally deduced.<sup>16</sup> R. Laurentin expresses the same admonition thus:

It is very important that marian theology should become more aware of the purely relative nature of its principles of systematization, of their limits, of their sub-ordination to the sources, and of the transcendence of God's thought. Even if it is, of necessity, an exercise of the intelligence and rightly has a rational aspect, theology, nevertheless, cannot be detached from the order of analogy and mystery; it is inadequate by its very nature, and must therefore, beware of the temptation to rationalism.<sup>17</sup>

If we avoid assuming any rigid logical implication, we can say that many consequences do follow from her Divine Maternity, her place as *Theotokos*, though we may slip into the less contemporary "privilege-Mariology." But, then, to be Mother of God is certainly a breath-taking privilege and might be expected to carry other privileges with it:

Mary is the paradigm of "grace alone,"...the free gift of God. She was the first to receive the promise made to the righteous; perfectly redeemed, by God's design

<sup>14</sup> R. Laurentin, *The Question of Mary* (New York, 1965), pp. 142-143; cited in Jelly, "Concrete meaning," p. 33."

<sup>15</sup> The great name of Descartes, devout client of Our Lady and vowed pilgrim to her shrine at Loreto, might be respectfully mentioned as one who sought mathematical clarity in a subject – epistemology – which did not afford it. Consequent disappointment plunged the world into idealism, first dogmatic, then skeptical. God forbid that our over-optimism or unfounded rigor might lead to comparable doubts concerning the inspiring and consoling truths about Mary. L. Gl.

<sup>16</sup> Jelly, "Concrete meaning," p. 32.

<sup>17</sup> Laurentin, *Question*, p. 104; cited in Jelly, "Concrete meaning," p. 32.

the first to enjoy fulfillment in her whole being. McHugh<sup>18</sup> is here using biblical language to convey the subsequently grasped and expressed doctrines of the Immaculate Conception, Mary's freedom from original sin, and her Assumption, her personal union with the Risen Lord.<sup>19</sup>

And we may recall the words of Canon Laurentin above, on the virginity, sanctity, conception, and assumption of the *Theotokos*.

*Theotokos: A Christological Term*

The Christ-relation is all-important to the concept of *Theotokos*.

The *Theotokos* is, always was and ever shall be essentially and primarily a Christological dogma. This does not mean that it fails to predicate any truth about Mary, but does emphasize the important point that it does so totally in relation to her Son who is at the very centre of our christian faith.<sup>20</sup>

The Divine Maternity is, in the words of Cardinal Newman, a glory of Mary for the sake of her son.<sup>21</sup> It guaranteed the doctrines the Church defined about him.

During the early patristic period, the Church's primary need was to safeguard the reality of the Lord's humanity against the heresies of docetism and gnosticism, heresies which denied that Christ was really a man or that he truly had a human birth from Mary. But when the truth of Christ's divinity was denied by Arius in the fourth century, the response of the Church opened the way for a more explicit understanding of Mary's role. To insist on the sublimity of Mary's role was a way of glorifying Jesus. Similarly, efforts to minimize Mary's role seemed to flow from lack of faith in Jesus. Thus the Nestorian denial of the traditional teaching about Mary's motherhood of God seemed to flow from the Arian denial that Jesus, Her Son, was the eternal Son of God. Nestorius wished her to be called only "mother of Christ," not "mother of God."<sup>22</sup>

The Christological basis, even the Christological meaning of *Theotokos*, was held by Christian teachers from the most ancient times:

There is no doubt that for St. Cyril and the Council Fathers at Ephesus, *Theotokos* represented a Christological dogma, centered on the mystery of the Incarnation. At the same time, the dogma asserts that Mary enjoys a unique relationship

<sup>18</sup> J. McHugh, *The Mother of Jesus in the New Testament* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975).

<sup>19</sup> E. Carroll, "Mary, the mother of Jesus," p. 81.

<sup>20</sup> Jelly, "Concrete meaning," p. 34.

<sup>21</sup> J. Newman, *Discourses addressed to mixed congregations*, XVI, "The glories of Mary for the sake of her son," cited in Jelly, "The Mother of Jesus," *The teaching of Christ*, eds. D. Wuerl, R. Lawler, T. Lawler (Huntington, Indiana: 1995), p. 94.

<sup>22</sup> Jelly, "Mother of Jesus," p. 94.



with Christ, that she is truly mother of the eternal Word, who took His human flesh from her.<sup>23</sup>

How should we picture this awesomely exalted Mother of God? George Tavad comes to our aid:

There are two aspects to the image of Mary in Christian thought and piety. On the one hand, as a daughter of the Jewish people and as the inhabitant of an obscure village of Galilee, she is one of us, an unpretentious member of the human race. We can empathize with her in the hardships or simply in the normal events of her life as a young girl, a fiancée, a mother. On the other hand, she was raised above all of us and even above the angels by the very dignity of her Son, Jesus of Nazareth, whom faith knows as the Son of God, the divine Word who became flesh in her for the salvation of humankind.<sup>24</sup>

Mary, Theotokos, is, like many of the works of God, fascinating yet overwhelming. How plausible is it that an obscure Jewish carpenter and executed convict is God Himself? Perhaps the only astonishment that exceeds it, is that an even more obscure teen-age girl be, and be called, Mother of God. Wonder has been called the beginning of philosophy. Perhaps it also is, of – permit me the neologism! – Theotokology. Still, centuries of devotion and millions of devout remind us that affection for her is even stronger in us than admiration. Rather than “overwhelming,” perhaps we should call her the most *attractive*, the most fascinating, of his marvelous creations.

### *St. Thomas' View of Mary and Mariology*

For Aquinas, Mariology is part of Christology and Christology is part of soteriology. The Common Doctor has a Christocentric view of the place of Our Lady and, at least by implication, an ecclesiotypical approach.<sup>25</sup> In this, he profoundly agrees with Vatican II.<sup>26</sup> After the First Part of his *Summa Theologiae*, treating of God, and the Second Part, about attaining the goal of life, the Third

<sup>23</sup> Jelly, “Mother of Jesus,” p. 95.

<sup>24</sup> G. Tavad, *The Forthbringer of God*, Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1988, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> F. Jelly, “St. Thomas’ theological interpretation of the ‘Theotokos’ and Vatican II’s hierarchy of truths of Catholic doctrine,” Extract from *Atti del congresso internazionale: problemi di teologia* (Napoli: Edizioni Domenicane italiane, a.s.), p. 222. In relation to Mariology as part of soteriology, Fr. Jelly says, “A balanced Christology and its consequent soteriology, with the requisite theological anthropology behind our interpretation of the unique role of Christ in our salvation, should lead not only to a sound ecclesiology but also to a more critical Mariology”. “Congar’s theological anthropology and doctrine of salvation,” *Josephinum Journal of Theology*, VI (1999), p. 86.

<sup>26</sup> “...The portrait of Mary from Vatican II is richly Christo-centric and ecclesio-typical. She is contemplated and venerated only in connection with the Lord and our salvation through, with and in him.” Jelly, “Hierarchy”, p. 227.

Part is about the Savior of the human race and the benefits he brings us. Mary is discussed in this part. It treats of the things our Savior did and suffered, first at his entry into the world. Mary is discussed here. In relation to Christ's conception, he treats of Mary's sanctification, virginity, marriage, the Annunciation and her conceiving. For the Angelic Doctor, the Divine Maternity is the fundamental aspect of Mariology; all others relate to that.<sup>27</sup>

The Angelic Doctor has had immense influence on Marian teaching, in the Councils of Trent and Vatican II, in the Marian documents of the Popes, and on other Doctors of the Church. He has influenced Mariologists, especially in the twentieth century. Roschini says, "No author in these seven centuries, has had, in the Marian field, an influence vaster or more profound than the Common Doctor."<sup>28</sup>

### *St. Bonaventure's View of Mary and Mariology*

Christology was also the center of Bonaventure's Mariology. The Franciscan Master viewed Mary and Mariology from different viewpoints, all centered on the Annunciation. Tavard finds four levels in his marian writings: scholastic theology, scripture commentary, preaching, and spiritual writings, though all basically unified around the Annunciation. Tavard finds him:

...objective and more intellectual in [his] scholastic writings, warm and more imaginative in his scriptural commentaries, devotional and more triumphalistic in his liturgical preaching, meditative and more interior in his spiritual opuscula and his final lectures. Bonaventure the theologian goes one way; Bonaventure the poet and orator takes another way. Yet, just as they are one person, the corresponding Mariologies are profoundly one at the core: they all turn around reflection on the central event of Mary's life, the Annunciation. At the four levels of the Seraphic Doctor's thought and expression regarding Mary, the Mother of the Savior is seen as the one who welcomes the angelic message. In her *fiat*, she commits herself body and soul to the divine purpose for her and for humanity. The archangel's word, "highly favored one"—in Greek, *kecharitomene*<sup>29</sup>—encapsulates the highest theology about the Virgin. It is in Mary's acceptance of this address that she becomes the indispensable instrument of the Incarnation, the Forthbringer of God. At that moment, the "Handmaid of the Lord" is made, by divine grace, the Bride of God.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> G. Roschini, "S. Tommaso e la Madonna," *Palestra del Clero*, (June 15, 1974), p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> G. Roschini, "L'influsso di S. Tommaso sullo sviluppo della Mariologia," *Atti del Congresso Internazionle: n. 4, Problemi di teologia*, loc. cit.

<sup>29</sup> This is Tavard's spelling. Some may prefer "k(kappa)ech(chi)aritomene" (Luke 1:28). This spelling, "kecharitomene," is used by R. Laurentin, *The truth of Christmas beyond the myths*, transl. M. Wrenn, (Petersham, Mass.: St. Bede's Publications, 1986), p. 17. Greek-English transliteration is awkward and not entirely uniform. L. Gl.

<sup>30</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 185f.

The Seraphic Doctor, like the Angelic, sees Mariology as part of Christology. He sees her solely as related to Christ, even when the context is not explicitly Christological. Like the event of the Annunciation, the focus on Christology is a unifying point. Tavard says:

...Mariology as such did not figure in the *Commentary* as a specific topic: it was Christology which brought about discussion of Mary. The dominant point of view was that of her title and her function as *Dei Genetrix*, the Forthbringer of God.<sup>31</sup> ...Bonaventure's specific questions about Mary, even when they are not referred directly to Christ and the Incarnation, do pertain, in Bonaventure's perspective, to Christ ...The logic and the context of Bonaventure's considerations on Mary are Christological.<sup>32</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor's earliest theological writings are the notes he made in preparation for his exposition on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. They follow closely the teaching of his masters and are now dispersed through that exposition, under the heading, *Dubia circa litteram magistri*, an "unfortunate title!" according to Tavard.<sup>33</sup> "Questions" or "commentary" might be more enlightening.

The central point of what these *dubia* had to say about Mary was her motherhood, her title and function as *Mater Dei*, i.e. *Mother of God*:

Yet the title which appears the most often in these [*dubia*, L. Gl.] is *Mater Dei*, the Mother of God. It is presumably significant that Bonaventure switched to *Dei Genetrix* in his more systematic investigations. Although the two expressions may be translated as "Mother of God," the connotations differ. *Mater Dei* conveys a more static vision of the Virgin-Mother, corresponding to the statue of Mary without the child. In fact, both romanesque and gothic art favored the statue, painting, or window showing Mary holding the child. Yet the representation of the Virgin standing by herself as though facing God or, in some cases, facing the people at prayer, is not unknown in medieval art, even though it is not found there as often as it will be in the baroque art of the Counter-Reformation. At any rate, *Dei Genetrix* connotes a more dynamic relationship between Mary and the divine child: she is the one who receives him as the Uncreated Word and brings him forth as the Incarnate Word.<sup>34</sup>

The Annunciation, Christology, and, now, the Divine Motherhood. These are the foci of Bonaventure's Mariology, three topics closely related: her Divine Maternity, the moment when she accepted the invitation to that motherhood, and the Divine Person whose mother she became.

St. Bonaventure never wrote a *Summa* of his own, so his view of where Mary fits into theology is less clear. The fullest expression of his formally

<sup>31</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 46.

<sup>32</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 14.

<sup>33</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 46.

theological views is found in his *Commentary on the Sentences*, which naturally follows the plan of Peter Lombard. Further statements are found in various sermons and opuscula. Perhaps some hint might be found in the *Summa* of Alexander of Hales. This is, of course, not an authentic work,<sup>35</sup> but it may reflect St. Bonaventure's views to the degree it truly reflects the views of the alleged author. The Seraphic Doctor said he never intended to depart from the opinions of his teachers and Alexander was the chief of these.<sup>36</sup>

Chiettni says the Divine Maternity is the principle of Bonaventurian Mariology, as it is of Thomistic.<sup>37</sup> This suggests that Bonaventure shared the view of Thomas that Mariology is part of Christology and Christology of soteriology. Thus Mary would be seen chiefly as the door for Christ's entrance into the world, even if as an understanding and willing human portal.

Tavard agrees with Chiettni's Christocentric view of the Seraphic Doctor's Mariology:

...Bonaventure's specific questions about Mary, even when they are not referred directly to Christ and the Incarnation, do pertain, in Bonaventure's perspective, to Christ as the "integral" subject matter of theological reflection. Thus the logic and the context of Bonaventure's considerations on Mary are Christological.<sup>38</sup>

He repeats what was quoted above: "...The heart of Bonaventurian Mariology is to be found in his recurrent reflections on the Annunciation."<sup>39</sup> And, of course, this was the beginning of the Divine Maternity and Mary's special relation to Christ and Christology.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>35</sup> "The *Summa Alexandri*, which presents the teaching of the earlier Franciscan school, was largely the work of Alexander's followers and colleagues, chiefly of Jean de la Rochelle." Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.43, n. 9.

<sup>36</sup> The earliest of Bonaventure's notes, written years before his *Commentary on the Sentences*, are dispersed through that *Commentary* as *dubia circa litteram*. Tavard says of these, "They closely reflect the teaching of Bonaventure's masters. They especially underline his indebtedness to Alexander of Hales . . . these notes ...give us the first version of their author's thinking. They will provide us with material for a preliminary enquiry into his views on the holy Virgin." Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp.3f.

<sup>37</sup> Chiettni, p.42.

<sup>38</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 14.

<sup>39</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. viii.

<sup>40</sup> George Kirwin cites Laurentin's view that, with some exceptions, Mariology was in decline from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, and gives as his opinion that St. Bonaventure was not original in his theology of Mary but does pass on important insights; George F. Kirwin, "The sermons of St. Bonaventure on Mary and their relationship to the cult of Mary," *De cultu mariano saeculis XII-XV: Acta Congressus Mariologici-Mariani Internationalis Romae anno 1975 celebrati*, Vol. IV, *De cultu mariano apud scriptores ecclesiasticos saec. XII-XIII*, Rome: Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis, 1980, p. 447, n.3

## Chapter One: Mary is Mother of God by her predestination and preparation

Chapter One of Part Two of the dissertation will have two divisions: first, Our Lady's predestination and, second, her preparation. The second division, her preparation, will treat of her preparation in body, including her virginity and the vow of virginity attributed to her by both the great Doctors, at least after her marriage, and also will discuss her preparation in soul, her holiness and the two Saints' opinions on the Immaculate Conception. This will show their teachings on Our Lady's predestination and preparation to be very much the same.

### 1. Predestination

#### ST. THOMAS ON MARY'S PREDESTINATION

According to God's plan, Our Lady stood on the borders of the Old and New Testaments.<sup>41</sup>

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, was predestined to be the divine Son of God. This was a gratuitous predestination. Human acts can, at most, merit beatitude but this is beyond beatitude. Grace cannot be merited, for grace is the principle of merit. But the Incarnation is the principle of grace. Much less, can it be merited. Also, since the human nature of Christ was united to the Divine Nature from the first moment of its existence, all Christ's human activities came *after* the Hypostatic Union and could not merit that union, which already existed. "... Every operation ...followed the union; therefore, no operation of his could have merited the union."<sup>42</sup> In fuller context:

... As far as Christ himself is concerned, it is manifest ...that none of his merits could have preceded the union. For we do not hold that he was previously a pure man and that afterward, by the merit of a good life, he succeeded in becoming the Son of God, as Photinus held: but we hold that from the beginning of his conception that man was truly the Son of God, insofar as having no other hypostasis than the Son of God, as said in Luke 1: "The holy to be born of thee shall be called Son of God." And therefore, every action of that man was subsequent to the union. And therefore no action of his can merit that union. ...Grace cannot fall under merit: for it is the principle of merit. Therefore much less does the Incarnation fall under merit, for it is the principle of grace, according to what is said in John 1: "Grace and truth have come about through Jesus Christ."

<sup>41</sup> Aquinas, *In IV Sent.*, d. 30, q.2, a. 1, sol. 1, ad 1. "Beata Virgo fuit confinium veteris et novae legis, sicut aurora diei et noctis"

<sup>42</sup> Aquinas, III, 2, 11. "...Omnis operatio ...subsecuta est unionem; ergo, nulla ejus operatio potuit esse meritoria unionis

Still the holy Fathers merited the Incarnation *de congruo*, by desiring and asking. For it is fitting that God hear those who obey him.

As to the second, . . . the mystery of the Incarnation is the principle of meriting: because "from the fullness of Christ we have all received," as is said in John 1.

As to the third, it is to be said that the Blessed Virgin is said to have merited to bear the Lord Jesus Christ, not because she merited that God become incarnate: but that, from the graces given her, she merited that degree of purity and holiness that she could fittingly ("congrue") be the Mother of God.<sup>43</sup>

This gratuitous predestination of Christ is the exemplary cause of ours. He merited for us all the effects of our predestination.<sup>44</sup> This predestination of Christ, hence also of Mary, depended, according to St. Thomas, on the divine foreknowledge and permission of Adam's sin. "Since, everywhere in Holy Scripture, the reason for the Incarnation is given as the sin of the first human, it is more fitting to say the work of the Incarnation was arranged by God as a remedy for sin, so that, had there been no sin, there would have been no Incarnation." Sin was permitted for the greater good.<sup>45</sup> Just as Christ as man was predestined to be Son of God in the power of sanctification and had such a fullness of grace that it overflowed from him to all, so Mary was chosen to be his mother and to be worthy of that office.<sup>46</sup> She was to receive such a fullness of grace that she would be nearest of all to the author of grace. She would receive within herself him who is full of all grace and she would, by bringing

<sup>43</sup> Aquinas, III, 2, 11, c. and ad 2 & 3. ...Quantum ad ipsum Christum, manifestum est ... quod nulla eius merita potuerunt praecedere unionem. Non enim ponimus quod ante fuerit purus homo, et postea per meritum bonae vitae obtinuerit esse Filius Dei, sicut posuit Photinus: sed ponimus quod a principio suae conceptionis ille homo vere fuerit Filius Dei, utpote non habens aliam hypostasim quam Filium Dei, secundum Luc. 1: "Quod ex te nascetur sanctum, vocabitur Filius Dei." Et ideo omnis operatio illius hominis subsecuta est unionem. Unde nulla eius operatio potuit esse meritorium unionis....Gratia non potest cadere sub merito: quia est merendi principium. Unde multo minus incarnatio cadit sub merito, quae est principium gratiae, secundum illud Joan. 1: "Gratia et veritas per Jesum Christum facta est."...

Ex congruo tamen meruerunt sancti Patres incarnationem, desiderando et petendo. Congruum enim erat ut Deus exaudiret eos qui ei obediebant...

Ad secundum...Incarnationis mysterium est principium merendi: quia "de plenitudine Christi omnes accepimus," ut dicitur Joan. 1.

Ad tertium dicendum quod Beata Virgo dicitur meruisse portare Dominum Iesum Christum, non quia meruit Deum incarnari: sed quia meruit, ex gratia sibi data, illum puritatis et sanctitatis gradum ut congrue posset esse mater Dei.

<sup>44</sup> Aquinas, III, 24, 4

<sup>45</sup> Aquinas, III, 1, 3, c. "...Cum in sacra Scriptura ubique incarnationis ratio ex peccato primi hominis assignetur, convenientius dicitur incarnationis opus ordinatum esse a Deo in remedium peccati, ita quo, peccato non existente, incarnatio non fuisset." Aquinas, III, 1, 3, ad 3

<sup>46</sup> Aquinas, III, 27, 4, c.

him forth, dispense grace, in a way, to all.<sup>47</sup> St. John the Baptist and Jeremiah were predestined to foreshadow, in a special way, the sanctification effected by Christ. Yet Mary received a fuller grace of sanctification than they. A sign of this is that it was granted to her, after her sanctification, not to sin either mortally or venially, whereas to them it was granted not to sin mortally, by the protection of God's grace.<sup>48</sup> The Angelic Doctor quotes St. Gregory Nazianzen to the effect that, in Mary, the royal family was united to the priestly race, so that Christ, who is both king and priest, should be born of both according to the flesh.<sup>49</sup> Also he mentions Mary's consent would be required, saying that the prophecy of predestination is fulfilled without the causality of our will but not without its consent.<sup>50</sup> According to St. Thomas, Mary could not, in any way, merit the Incarnation itself. Not even Christ, as man, could merit it. The Incarnation came through purely gratuitous predestination. In the *Scriptum super Sententias*, Thomas says the Hebrew Fathers could not merit the Incarnation but suggests (rather than states) that they merited its acceleration: The prayer which is offered by someone purely and perseveringly, merits its own fulfillment. But the holy Fathers prayed in this way for the Incarnation, as is clear from Isaiah, 44:1: "Oh, that you would break through the heavens and come". Therefore they merited it.

About the fourth, it should be said that they did not ask for the Incarnation, which they undoubtedly believed would come about; but they asked for its acceleration.<sup>51</sup>

The Angelic Doctor does not state here that they merited the acceleration of the Incarnation but, having mentioned meriting that acceleration, he distinguishes and does not deny. If the Fathers of the Old Testament merited, through their prayers, the acceleration of the Incarnation, we can conclude that, *a fortiori*, Mary did. The great Doctor goes on to say that, while we can, by faith and love, merit our eternal life, a benefit for ourselves individually, the ancients could not merit the Incarnation, a benefit for the whole human race.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Aquinas, III, 27, 5, c & ad 1.

<sup>48</sup> Aquinas, III, 27, 6, ad 1.

<sup>49</sup> Aquinas, III, 31, 2, ad 2.

<sup>50</sup> Aquinas, III, 30, 1, ad 1.

<sup>51</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 4, q. 3, a. 1, 4 & ad 4. ...Oratio quae fit ab aliquo pure et perseveranter, pro se et ad salutem pertinens, meretur sui impletionem. Sed sancti patres hoc modo orabant pro incarnatione, ut patet Isa., LXIV, 1 "Utinam dirumperes caelos et venires." Ergo eam merebantur.

Ad quartam, dicendum quod ipsi non petebant incarnationem, quam indubitanter credebant futuram; sed petebant accelerationem eius.

<sup>52</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 4, q. 3, a. 1, ad 5.

Nor, even assuming the Incarnation was to take place, could Mary merit *de condigno*, in justice, that it take place through her. But, by using the graces God had freely given her, she merited this *de congruo*, by a sort of suitability.

About the sixth, it should be said that the blessed Virgin did not merit the Incarnation, but, presupposing the Incarnation, she merited that it take place through her, not indeed by condign merit, but by congruous merit, in so far as it was fitting that the Mother of God be most pure and most perfect.

The Blessed Virgin could not merit the Incarnation; but, presupposing the Incarnation, she merited that it take place through her, not by condign merit but by *congruous merit*, insofar as it was fitting that the Mother of God be the most pure and most perfect.<sup>53</sup>

Even merit *de condigno* is not according to the justice of absolute equality—except in the case of Christ—but according to a certain proportion and based on God's choice.<sup>54</sup>

Merit *de congruo* is not a title in strict justice. It is based on the liberality of the one rewarding and a certain analogous fitness in the one receiving.

St. Thomas discusses reward and condign and congruous merit, in his *Scriptum super Sententias*:

One is said to merit when an equality is found between the reward and the merit, according to a just estimate; but only *de congruo*, when such equality is not found but a gift is given which befits the liberality of the giver according to his liberality.... For there are two kinds of equality, namely equality of quantity and equality of proportion. According to the equality of quantity, we do not merit eternal life by acts of virtue, for there is not so much goodness in the quantity of an act of virtue, as in the reward of glory, which is its end. But according to the equality of proportion, we do merit eternal life. Equality of proportion is meant when one thing is to a second as a third is to a fourth. It is not greater for God to give eternal life, than for us to perform an act of virtue, but as one is to the second, so the third is to the fourth and so a sort of equality is found between God rewarding and a human meriting; provided, though, that the reward belongs to the same genus as the merit, so that if the reward is something that exceeds all the power of human nature, such as eternal life, the merit is also from an act in which there shines forth the goodness of a divinely infused habit through which God puts his seal on us. So those who say we can merit eternal life, seem to speak more truly. For there are two kinds of justice, as the Philosopher says in *V Ethics*, chap. II, namely distributive justice and the commutative justice found in contracts like buying and selling: commutative justice relates to arithmetical equality, which indicates equality of quantity; but distributive justice looks to geometrical equality, which is the equality of proportion. Now in rendering a reward for merits

<sup>53</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 4, q. 3, a. 1, ad 6. Ad sextum dicendum quod beata Virgo non meruit incarnationem; sed praesupposita incarnatione meruit quod per eam fieret, non quidem merito condigni, sed merito congrui, inquantum decebat ut Dei mater esset purissima et perfectissima.

<sup>54</sup> Aquinas, I-II, 114, 1, c.



there is more of the nature of distribution than commutation, for God gives to each of us according to our works, while he receives nothing from us.<sup>55</sup>

Later, he writes of the same subject, in the *Summa theologiae*:

...Merit and payment refer to the same thing. That is called "payment" which is returned to someone as a return for his work or labor, as a sort of price of it. Therefore, just as paying a just price for a thing accepted from someone is an act of justice, so also to pay wages to someone for his work or labor is an act of justice. For justice is a kind of equality. Therefore justice is found fully between those between whom there is true equality: where full equality is not found, neither is there true justice, but some kind of justice can be there....And because of that, among those where there is true justice, there is the true nature of merit and repayment. Among those who have justice not fully but after a fashion (secundum quid) the nature of merit is not present fully but only after a fashion, to the extent that justice is found there: in this way a son merits something from his father and a servant from his master.

It is plain that between God and humans there is the greatest inequality: they are infinitely distant from each other and everything good a human has, is from God. Hence there cannot be justice in strict equality from a human to God, but according to a certain proportion: that is, as long as each works in his own way. The manner and the measure of human virtue comes to man from God. And therefore there can be no merit of humans with God except on the assumption of a divine ordinance: so that, viz., the human attains that from God, through his work, as his reward, what God has assigned him for the virtue of working. In the same way, natural things, by their own manner of acting, attain that to which God has ordered them. But still, in a different way: since a rational creature

<sup>55</sup> Aquinas, *II Sent.*, d. 27, q. 1, a. 4, c. Dicitur autem aliquis mereri ex condigno, quando invenitur aequalitas inter praeium et meritum, secundum rectam estimationem; ex congruo autem tantum, quando talis aequalitas non invenitur, sed solum secundum liberalitatem dantis munus tribuitur quod dantem decet.... Est enim duplex aequalitas. Scilicet aequalitas quantitatis et aequalitas proportionis. Secundum quantitatis aequalitatem ex actibus virtutum vitam aeternam ex condigno non meremur; non enim tantum bonum est in quantitate actus virtutis, quantum praeium gloriae, quod est finis ejus. Secundum autem aequalitatem proportionis ex condigno meremur vitam aeternam. Attenditur enim aequalitas proportionis, quando aequaliter se habet hoc ad illud, sicut aliud ad alterum. Non autem majus est Deo vitam aeternam tribuere, quam nobis actum virtutis exhibere: sed sicut hoc congruit huic, ita illud illi; et ideo quaedam proportionis aequalitas invenitur inter Deum praemiantem et hominem merentem; dum tamen praeium referatur ad idem genus in quo est meritum, ut si praeium est quod omnem facultatem humanae naturae excedit, sicut vita aeterna, meritum autem sit per talem actum in quo refulgeat bonum illius habitus qui divinitus infunditur, Deo nos consignans. Illi tamen qui dicunt nos ex condigno vitam aeternam posse mereri, verius dicere videntur. Cum enim sit duplex species justitiae, in *V Ethicorum*, cap. II, Philosophus dicit, scilicet justitia distributiva et commutativa, quae in contractibus, ut in emptione et venditione: justitia commutativa respicit aequalitatem arithmetica, quae tendit in aequalitatem quantitatis; justitia vero distributiva aequalitatem respicit geometricam, quae est aequalitas proportionis. In redditione autem praemii ad merita magis servatur forma distributionis, cum ipse unicuique secundum opera sua reddat, quam commutationis, cum Deus a nobis nihil accipiat; ...

moves himself to action by free will, and therefore his action has the nature of merit; which is not found in other creatures.<sup>56</sup>

Should [the meritorious work of man—L. Gl.] be considered according to the substance of the work and according to its proceeding from [human—L. Gl.] free will, then there can be no condignity there, because of the very great inequality. But there is congruity there, because of a certain equality of proportion: for it seems appropriate that God, according to the excellence of his own virtue, should reward the human who works according to *his* own virtue.<sup>57</sup>

If the owner of the vineyard had chosen to give more than one denarius to those who had borne the heat of the day, it would have been merited *de congruo*.

The article "Merit" by C.S. Sullivan, in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*,<sup>58</sup> shows how the ecumenically-abrasive concept of merit has scriptural and patristic roots and is compatible with God's totally undeserved liberality.

This correlation between works and a reward is highlighted especially in the parable of the talents.<sup>59</sup> There the gratuity of God's gifts and the notion that a reward is given for willingly using these gifts are placed side by side; and the parable suggests that God, in bestowing rewards, takes human effort into account. It is

<sup>56</sup> Aquinas, I-II, 114, 1, c. ...Meritum et merces ad idem referuntur: id enim merces dicitur quod alicui recompensatur pro retributione operis vel laboris, quasi quoddam pretium ipsius. Unde sicut reddere iustum pretium pro re accepta ab aliquo, est actus iustitiae; ita enim recompensare mercedem operis vel laboris, est actus iustitiae. Iustitia autem aequalitas quaedam est;...Et ideo simpliciter est iustitia inter eos quorum est simpliciter aequalitas: eorum vero quorum non est simpliciter aequalitas, non est simpliciter iustitia, sed quidam iustitiae modus potest esse, ...Et propter hoc, in his in quibus est simpliciter iustum, et simpliciter ratio meriti et mercedis. In quibus autem est secundum quid iustum, et non simpliciter, in his etiam non simpliciter est ratio meriti sed secundum quid, inquantum salvatur ibi iustitiae ratio: sic enim et filius meretur aliquid a patre, et servus a domino...Manifestum est autem quod inter Deum et hominem est maxima inaequalitas: in infinitum enim distant, et totum quod est hominis bonum, est a Deo. Unde non potest hominis ad Deum esse iustitia secundum absolutam aequalitatem, sed secundum proportionem quandam: inquantum scilicet uterque operatur secundum modum suum. Modus autem et mensura humanae virtutis homini est a Deo. Et ideo meritum hominis apud Deum esse non potest nisi secundum praesuppositionem divinae ordinationis: ita scilicet ut id homo consequatur a Deo per suam operationem quasi mercedem, ad quod Deus ei virtutem operandi deputavit. Sicut etiam res naturales hoc consequuntur per proprios modos et operationes, ad quod a Deo sunt ordinatae. Differenter tamen: quia creatura rationalis seipsam movet ad agendum per liberum arbitrium, unde sua actio habet rationem meriti; quod non est in aliis creaturis.

<sup>57</sup> Aquinas, I-II, 114, 3, c. Si [opus meritorium hominis—L.Gl.] consideretur secundum substantiam operis, et secundum quod procedit ex libero arbitrio [humano—L.Gl.], sic non potest ibi esse condignitas, propter maximam inaequalitatem. Sed est ibi congruitas, propter quandam aequalitatem proportionis: videtur enim congruum ut homini operanti secundum suam virtutem, Deus recompenset secundum excellentiam suae virtutis

<sup>58</sup> IX: pp.683-6.

<sup>59</sup> Lk 19:11.

valid to conclude that man's efforts to serve God have a value. The Gospel writers by their general reiteration that man's work can deserve a reward thus provide the basic notion of the concept of merit.

St. Thomas said Christ was predestined to be Son of God and had such a fullness of grace that it overflowed from him to all. In a like manner, Mary was chosen to be his mother and to be worthy of that office. She was to receive such a fullness of grace that she would be nearest of all to the author of grace. But grace does not overflow from her to others. Only in so far as she received Christ in herself and brought him forth, did she, in a way, dispense grace to all. "She received into herself him who is filled with every grace; and, in giving him birth, in some way channeled grace to all."<sup>60</sup>

#### ST. BONAVENTURE ON MARY'S PREDESTINATION

The Seraphic Doctor did say Mary was, from the beginning, the predestined mother of her predestined Son. God decreed to create the world and, foreseeing the fall of Adam, decreed to redeem the human race by the Son's becoming man.<sup>61</sup> Thus Christology, is, for him, as for St. Thomas, a part of soteriology and he holds no Scotist "absolute primacy."<sup>62</sup>

From eternity, God chose Mary out of millions to be the Mother of the Messiah. Christ is the source of all salvation.<sup>63</sup> Mary's predestination is connected with Jesus': "From the beginning she was high in the councils (sic) of God, the predestined Mother of the Son predestined."<sup>64</sup> And it is dependent upon Jesus' predestination, and extends to small details, as Tavad puts it:

In Mary's life one sees the cosmic design of God at work for her Son. After twelve years of universal peace, when "the Temple of Peace in Rome was closed," the emperor ordered a description of the world to be made: "God put it in the heart of this pagan, so that the Virgin would go to Bethlehem and there give birth in a manger."<sup>65</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Aquinas, III, q. 27, a. 5, ad 1. "Eum qui est plenus omni gratia, in se reciperet; et, eum pariendo, quodammodo gratiam ad omnes derivaret."

<sup>61</sup> E. Healy, *Woman according to St. Bonaventure* (New York: Georgian P, 1956) pp. 69ff; Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, IV, 1, p. 241.

<sup>62</sup> John Duns Scotus held that the Incarnation was decreed from the beginning, regardless of human behavior or misbehavior.

<sup>63</sup> E. Healy, *St. Bonaventure's "De reductione artium ad theologiam," a commentary with an introduction and translation* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: St. Bonaventure U. P, 1939) p. 202.

<sup>64</sup> Healy, *Woman*, p. 205; cf. pp. 206f.

<sup>65</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 183. "In Sapientia (18:14 ff): *Cum quietum silentium contineret omnia, . . . omnipotens sermo tuus de coelo a regalibus sedibus etc. . . . Tunc in maxima pace fuit mundus totus, unde et per duodecim annos templum pacis Romae clausum fuit ante adventum Christi, quia tempore guerrae semper apertum erat et tempore pacis clausum, . . . Tunc etiam*

God knew Mary not only through the knowledge of predestination, but "through the inspired announcements of the prophets. Predestination, prophecy, and knowledge of creatures all originate in God. He does not learn from them. He expresses, in them, his own decrees, in different ways. His decree of predestination is distinct, to our way of thinking, from his decree to announce something through the prophets."<sup>66</sup>

The name, "Mary," was not found on earth, nor invented by the mind or will of man but a name that came from heaven and was given to the Virgin by divine ordinance. "This sweet and lovely name was destined for her, says the Seraphic Doctor, for Mary means 'Star of the Sea'."<sup>67</sup>

"She is shown to be named beforehand in that it says: *And the name of the Virgin was Mary*. For Mary is interpreted Star of the Seas, and so the prophecy of Balaam is shown to be fulfilled."<sup>68</sup>

Also other prophecies refer to her, e.g. Sirach, 50, Apoc., ch. 22.

The Lord had chosen and predestined Mary before the constitution of the world, according to the Seraphic Doctor.<sup>69</sup> She is the "primogenita," the "first-born before every creature".<sup>70</sup> The great sign of Revelation, 12:1, the woman clothed with the sun, indicates Mary, "who long lay hidden under the shadow of the Law, wrapped in the Scriptures, hidden beneath metaphors, foretold by

imperator describi fecit mundum; et Deus hoc ponebat in corde pagani, ut Virgo iret in Bethlehem et ibi pareret in diversorio (literally 'an inn')." Bonaventure, *Collationes in Hexaemeron*, coll. 16, no. 16; ("In Wisdom (18:14ff.): 'When peaceful silence lay over all. . . down from the heavens, from the royal throne, etc. [leapt your all-powerful Word] (Jerusalem Bible).' (My translation) Then the whole world was in the greatest peace, and therefore the temple of peace at Rome was closed for twelve years before the coming of Christ, . . . Then too the emperor had the whole world enumerated; and God put this into the heart of this pagan, so that the Virgin would go to Bethlehem and give birth in an inn." Cf. Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 183.

<sup>66</sup> *De purificatione B. Virginis*. Sermo II, t.IX, 641b; Healy 206, n. 8. . "Prisquam te formarem in utero, novi te," non solum cognitione praedestinationis, sed multiplicis praenuntiationis; ab initio (enim) mundi usque ad suum ortum fuit praenuntiata per quinque millia annorum, antequam nasceretur"

<sup>67</sup> Healy, p. 206. Bonaventure follows St. Jerome on the meanings of Hebrew names like "Star of the Sea." Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 59.

<sup>68</sup> Bonaventure, *Comment. in Evangelium Lucae* C.I. t.VII, 21b, 22a. Ostenditur etiam praenominata in hoc quod dicit: *Et nomen virginis Maria*. Maria enim stella maris interpretatur, et sic ostenditur impleta illa prophetia Balaam.

<sup>69</sup> Bonaventure, *De donis Spiritus sancti*, coll. 6, n. 6; V, 484b; Tavard says the plan of the creation of the world was included in God's predestination of Mary: "If indeed, in Bonaventure's perspective, Mary has been raised by God, from the early time of her life, above all created hierarchies, then it is legitimate to find in her the image, form, or figure of the divine plan for the world;" *Forthbringer*, p.132.

<sup>70</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M.V.*, sermo 6; IX, 682b.

the prophet's loud heralding, led forth through the desire of the saints, coming out of the womb with the jubilation of many holy ones".<sup>71</sup>

She could have merited neither her election for the Divine Maternity, nor her sanctification in the womb. But having accepted these gratuitous gifts, she cooperated with them so that, "she progressed very rapidly and like the sun, most swiftly ran" from strength to strength<sup>72</sup> and "from good to better"<sup>73</sup> and finally came to the point where God made her his mother because of her supreme sanctity, outstanding charity,<sup>74</sup> singular humility<sup>75</sup> and angelic purity.<sup>76</sup> Tavard reminds us that these virtues were basically free gifts: "One should of course remember at this point that the purity, humility, and benignity were the work of grace in her."<sup>77</sup>

The opposite of purely gratuitous predestination is merit. St. Bonaventure discusses different kinds of merit in his basic academic work, the *Commentary on the Sentences*:

It can happen that something is merited *de congruo* and it can happen that something is merited, when the nature of merit is found there perfectly and fully; and then there is a sort of identical measurement and equality of the merit to the payment. But congruous merit is had when there is a disposition of congruity in relation to the one to whom that disposition is ordered, but which falls short of the nature of condignity. And this can be in three ways. For there is either congruity without worthiness, and so a sinner through good works in general, performed without charity, merits *de congruo* the first grace; for there is there a certain fittingness, because he does what lies within him, but there is no "condignity," since he is an enemy of God and unworthy of the bread he eats. Or there is there worthiness with unworthiness, as when a just man merits first grace for a sinner: for there is worthiness on the part of the just man, who is a friend of God and worthy to be heard by God, but unworthiness on the part of the sinner, and therefore the full nature of merit is not present. Or there is worthiness with a degree of inferiority; and in this way one who has less grace merits, by a good use of it to arrive at an increase of grace; and this manner of meriting, although it falls short of condign merit and is contained under congruous merit, still, among the other aforementioned manners of meriting, it most nearly approaches the perfection of meriting and therefore stand, as it were, in the middle between congruous and condign merit.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 6; IX, 701b.

<sup>72</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 2; IX, 709b.

<sup>73</sup> Bonaventure, *Ibid.*, *sermo* 3; IX, 713a.

<sup>74</sup> Bonaventure, *De. Ann. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 2; IX, 660b.

<sup>75</sup> Bonaventure, *De perfect. vitae ad sorores*, c. 2, n. 3; VIII, 110b.

<sup>76</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 3; IX, 660b.

<sup>77</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 28.

<sup>78</sup> Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d. 27, a. 2, q. 2; II, pp. 664f. Contingit enim, aliquid mereri *ex congruo*, et contingit, aliquid mereri, quando ratio meriti reperitur ibi perfecte et plene; et tunc est quaedam commensuratio et adaequatio meriti ad premium ... Meritum autem *congrui* dicitur

In this passage, St. Bonaventure speaks of condign merit as having the nature of merit perfectly and fully, of there being “quaedam commensuratio et adequatio,” a “certain common measurement and equality,” between the merit and the reward. That seems similar to what St. Thomas says of condign merit, perhaps even what he says of strict justice between equals, which, apparently, can be verified only of the merit of Christ himself.

In a “scholion” immediately following the above passage from Bonaventure, the Quaracchi editors of his works say about the good person meriting an increase of grace (the topic of the Question):

Now, in common with St. Thomas ...it is said that “an increase of grace falls under condign merit.” Now although St. Bonaventure uses a different manner of speaking when he calls that merit *de congruo*, still the disagreement is only in the word. For he restricts the nature of merit, and expands merit *de congruo*, as is plain from the text, where he says that worthiness with a degree of inferiority falls short of merit, but in such a way that it most nearly approaches the perfection of merit and, in a way, stands between merit *de congruo* and merit *de condigno*.<sup>79</sup>

The Quaracchi editors believe there is an overlap of, on the one hand, the highest level of St. Bonaventure’s congruous merit and, on the other, of St. Thomas’ condign merit.

In the immediately following, rather lengthy “Quaestio,” St. Bonaventure says that the obligation binding God in the case of condign merit comes, not from necessity but from his pure kindness, out of which he chose to promise and guarantee the reward of himself to those who love him. He says that a reward

in quo est aliqua dispositio congruitatis respectu eius, ad quod illa dispositio ordinatur, quae tamen deficit a ratione *condignitatis*. Et hoc potest esse tripliciter. Aut enim est congruitas *sine dignitate*; et sic peccator per bona opera in genere, facta extra caritatem, meretur de congruo primam gratiam; ibi enim est quaedam congruitas, quia facit quod in se est; non est tamen condignitas, quia inimicus Dei est et indignus pane, quo vescitur. Aut est ibi *dignitas cum indignitate*, sicut est, quando vir iustus meretur pro peccatori primam gratiam: dignitas enim ex parte viri iusti, qui est amicus Dei et dignus a Deo exaudiri, sed indignitas est ex parte peccatoris; et ideo non est ibi plena ratio meriti. Aut est ibi *dignitas cum gradus inferioritate*; et sic habens gratiam minorem meretur per bonum usum pervenire ad gratiae cumulum; et hic modus merendi etsi deficiat a merito condigni et contineatur sub merito congrui, maxime tamen inter ceteros modos praedictos merendi accedit ad perfectionem merendi, et ideo quasi medium tenet inter meritum congrui et meritum condigni ...

<sup>79</sup> Quaracchi editors, “Scholion,” in Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d. 27, a. 2, q. 2; II, p. 665. Nunc communiter cum S. Thoma ...dicitur, quod “augmentum gratiae cadit sub merito condigni.” Licet autem S. Bonav. alio modo loquendi utitur, cum illud meritum nominet *de congruo*, tamen dissidium non est nisi de nomine. Ipse enim rationem meriti restringit, rationem meriti *de congruo* extendit, ut patet ex textu, ubi dicit dignitatem cum gradus inferioritate a merito deficere, sed ita ut maxime accedat ad perfectionem meriti et quasi medium teneat inter meritum de congruo et condigno.

much greater than the service rendered, which would, of itself be merited only congruously, is owed by *condign* merit, when God voluntarily *obliges himself* by a promise to give this payment for that work. The difficulty of the work makes a difference. A work that is in the doer's will but above his powers but which he is raised above himself to do, and in which he puts an eternal good ahead of the good which is his own, is a work which is worthy of an eternal reward and by it, he can merit by *condign* merit. He goes on to say:

Therefore it is clear that a meritorious work, considered in comparison to freedom of will and the liberality of the dispenser and the opportuneness of the time, is meritorious by merit *de congruo*. But in comparison with the dignity of grace, the truthfulness of the one promising and its own difficulty, it is meritorious by *condign* merit.<sup>80</sup>

In the responses of the same question, in which he defends the just human's *condign* merit to eternal glory, he says:

Should anyone object that there can be no *condign* merit there because there is no common measure, it should be said, that, even though there is no common measure by a total equality, there is, however, a common measure by a certain fitting proportionality, just as the fruit is said to be commensurate with the seed, when it greatly exceeds it, as it is proportionate to the fertility of the seed and of the germinating earth.<sup>81</sup>

In this third "Quaestio," the Seraphic Doctor shows considerable flexibility on merit, going beyond the merit of Christ's works and explicitly including the very unequal offerings of creatures. Is this reason enough to suspend my reverential assent to the teaching above of the very distinguished Quaracchi editors and think that Bonaventure's and Thomas' "condign merit" might mean roughly the same? I shall tentatively proceed along that reckless path.

Mary's charity toward God is one of the causes impelling her to consent to Gabriel's message. But the Seraphic Doctor gave an even greater value to the virtue of faith, which he called the meritorious cause of her conception: "Therefore she conceived because she believed. But it is certain that faith ...was not the efficient cause of the conception: so it was the meritorious cause."<sup>82</sup> Faith

<sup>80</sup> Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d.27, a. 2, q. 3; II, p. 667. Patet igitur, quod opus meritorium, consideratum in comparatione ad voluntatis libertatem et dispensatoris liberalitatem et temporis opportunitatem, est meritorium merito congrui. Comparatum vero ad gratiae dignitatem, ad pollicentis veritatem et ad sui ipsius difficultatem, est meritorium merito condigni

<sup>81</sup> Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d.27, a. 2, q. 3; II, p. 667. Si autem aliquis obiiciat, quod non potest ibi esse meritum condigni, quia non est ibi commensuratio; dicendum, quod etsi non sit commensuratio per omimodam aequalitatem, est tamen commensuratio per quandam convenientem proportionabilitatem, sicut fructus dicit recte commensurari semini, quando tantum excedit, sicut conveniebat fecunditati seminis et terrae germinanti.

<sup>82</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 2, q. 2, fund. 1; III, 106a.

was the condition *sine qua non* of the Divine Maternity: "Nor would she have conceived had she not believed."<sup>83</sup> "And because of this she was praiseworthy in conceiving, that she conceived by faith."<sup>84</sup>

The Franciscan teacher says Mary excelled Abraham in faith: "For Abraham believed he could have a son by a sterile old woman; but Mary believed a virgin might conceive by the Holy Spirit."<sup>85</sup> He even went as far as Augustine<sup>86</sup>, in saying, "Mary was more blessed in conceiving the faith of Christ than in conceiving the flesh of Christ."<sup>87</sup>

Our Lady merited the Incarnation by reason of her virtues, among which charity and faith stood out, and also by her consent to the Incarnation ineffably to be brought about in herself. The Seraphic Doctor agrees with Albert the Great<sup>88</sup> and the Angelic Doctor<sup>89</sup> in refusing to Mary condign merit as to the conceiving of the Lord.<sup>90</sup>

But, while the Universal Doctor, St. Albert, and the Common Doctor allow her only merit *de congruo*, the Seraphic Doctor recognizes three kinds of merit: *de condigno*, *de digno*, and *de congruo*. He attributes to Mary merit *de congruo* for the time before the second sanctification. But after she had given her consent, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, she received, not only congruous merit for the conception of the word, but merit *de digno*.<sup>91</sup>

However, it is not easy to see how much difference there is between one kind of merit and another. J. Terrien says merit *de digno* is a species of merit *de congruo*, just of a higher degree.<sup>92</sup> J. Bittremieux agrees.<sup>93</sup> It is certain that merit *de digno* is not a kind of condign merit. It lacks the equality between merit and reward which is necessary for condign merit. The saint himself says, *Dignitas* takes nothing away from the liberality of grace or of the benignity of mercy; indeed it remains with them.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Bonaventure, *In Hexaem.*, coll. 17, n. 9; V, 410b.

<sup>84</sup> Bonaventure, *Comm. Evg. Lc.*, c. 11, n. 62; VII, 297a.

<sup>85</sup> Bonaventure, *In Hexaem.*, coll. 17, n. 9; V 410b.

<sup>86</sup> Augustine, *De sancta virginitate*, c. 3, n. 3; PL 40, 398.

<sup>87</sup> Bonaventure, *Comm. Evg. Lc.*, c. 11, n. 62; VII, 297a.

<sup>88</sup> Albert, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a.7; XXVIII, 87b-88a.

<sup>89</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 4, q. 3, a. 1; VII, 20c ff.

<sup>90</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 2, q. 2, c. ; III, 107b.

<sup>91</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 2, q. 2, c.; III, 107b.

<sup>92</sup> J. Terrien, *La Mère de Dieu et la mère des hommes*. Paris, 1900.

<sup>93</sup> J. Bittremieux, *De mediatione universali B.M. Virginis quoad gratias*. Bruges, 1926, p. 33; cf. L. DiFonzo, *Doctrina S. Bonaventurae de universali mediatione B. Virginis Mariae*. Rome, 1938, pp. 54 ff.

<sup>94</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 2., q. 2, ad 3 & 4; III, 108b; cf. *ibid.*, ad opp. 4; III, 107a.



The Seraphic Doctor compares Our Lady's merit *de digno* with the merit by which the just man can obtain grace for a sinner: "It is merit *de digno*, namely, by which a just man prays for another and merits to be heard."<sup>95</sup>

"As I have said that a just man can merit first grace for a sinner by the merit of dignity, ...so it can be conceded that the Blessed Virgin merited the conception, not only by congruous merit, but by merit *de digno*."<sup>96</sup>

The merit by which Our Lady deserved the Divine Maternity was of the species of merit which St. Bonaventure called "worthiness together with unworthiness" ("dignitas cum indignitate"). For he distinguished three kinds of congruous merit:

On the one hand ...there is congruity without worthiness (dignity), and in this way, a sinner can merit first grace *de congruo* through some work in general performed outside [the state of] charity, because he does what is in his power; but there is, however, no condignity, because he is an enemy of God and is unworthy of the bread he eats. On the other hand, there is worthiness together with unworthiness, as when a just man merits first grace for a sinner: there is worthiness on the part of the just man, who is a friend of God and worthy to be heard by him, but unworthiness on the part of the sinner; and therefore there is not here the full nature of merit. Or there is ...worthiness with a degree of inferiority; and in this way one who has a lesser grace merits, by good use of it to arrive at an increase of grace; and this manner of meriting, although it falls short of condign merit and is classified under congruous merit, still it approaches the perfection of merit most nearly of all the other ways of meriting that have been mentioned, and therefore holds something of a middle place between congruous and condign merit.<sup>97</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor indicates how much this merit is above the merits of other saints in these words:

...The Blessed Virgin, after she was sanctified by the Holy Spirit, having heard the annunciation from the angel, was filled with such an endowment of grace

<sup>95</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 2, q. 2, c.; III, 107b. : "Est meritum digni, quo scilicet vir justus orat pro alio et mereretur exaudiri.

<sup>96</sup> Bonaventure, *ibid.*, III, 107b. Sicut dixi, quod primam gratiam potest mereri justus peccatori merito dignitatis, ...sic potest concedi, quod beata Virgo non tantum merito congrui, sed merito dignitatis merui conceptionem.

<sup>97</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 2, q. 2, c.; II, 655a. Aut ...est congruitas sine dignitate, et sic peccator per opus in genere facta extra caritatem, meretur de congruo primam gratiam; ibi enim est quaedam congruitas, quia facit quod in se est; non est tamen condignitas, quia inimicus Dei est et indignus pane quo vescitur. Aut est dignitas cum indignitate sicut est, quando vir justus meretur peccatori primam gratiam: dignitas enim ex parte viri justi, qui est amicus Dei et dignus a Deo exaudiri, sed indignitas est ex parte peccatoris; et ideo non est ibi plena ratio meriti. Aut est ...dignitas cum gradus inferioritate; et sic habens gratiam minorem meretur per bonum usum pervenire ad gratiae cumulum; et hic modus merendi, etsi deficiat a merito condigni et contineatur sub merito congrui, maxime tamen inter coeteros modos praedictos merendi accedit ad perfectionem meriti, et ideo quasi medium tenet inter meritum congrui et meritum condigni

that she could merit worthily ("digne") what all the saints gathered together could not.<sup>98</sup>

#### COMPARISON OF THE TWO DOCTORS ON MARY'S MERIT (AS OPPOSED TO GRATUITOUS PREDESTINATION)

The two Doctors agree that first came the divine decree to create the universe and humans. Then the foreseeing of human sin. Subsequently and consequently, the Incarnation was decreed by God. (Scotus said the Incarnation was decreed first, independently of human behavior or misbehavior. Neither of our Saints agrees with him.) Mary was part of the divine decree. She was gratuitously predestined to be Mother of God and to receive great graces, even in her mother's womb.

Once she existed and could choose to respond to these predestined graces, she could then merit. From this point on, there is a considerable difference between the teachings of Thomas and Bonaventure. Both say Our Lady merited to conceive and bear Our Lord, but they understand that in different ways. The Angelic Doctor says Mary merited to conceive Christ, only supposing the Incarnation. She merited *de congruo* and in the way of execution,<sup>99</sup> that it come about through herself:

...It ought to be said that the Blessed Virgin did not merit the Incarnation but, once the Incarnation was presupposed, she merited, not by condign merit but by congruous merit, that it take place through her insofar as it was fitting that the mother of God be most pure and most perfect.<sup>100</sup>

...The Blessed Virgin is said to have merited to bear the Lord Jesus Christ, not because she merited that God become incarnate, but because she merited, from grace given her, that degree of purity and sanctity, that she could suitably be the Mother of God.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 2, q. 2, ad 2; III, 108a. ...Beata Virgo, postquam, annuntiatione audita ex angelo, sanctificata fuit a Spiritu sancto, tanto munere gratiae est impleta, ut aliquid digne posset mereri, quod non possent, si omnes alii Sancti essent congregati simul.

<sup>99</sup> "in via executionis," Chietтини, E. Mariologia S. Bonaventurae. Vol. 3 of Bibliotheca Mariana Medii Aevi. Rome: Officium Libri Cattolici, 1941 p.52.

<sup>100</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 4, q. 3, a. 1, ad 6. Cf. Aquinas, III, 2, 11, ad 3, & C. Friethoff, "Utrum B.V. Maria meruit portare Christum Dominum?" *Angelicum*, Rome, 10(1933), 181-94 ... Dicendum quod beata Virgo non meruit incarnationem; sed praesupposita incarnatione meruit quod per eam fieret, non quidem merito condigni, sed *merito congrui*, inquantum decebat ut Dei mater esset purissima et perfectissima.

<sup>101</sup> Aquinas, III, 2, 11, ad 3. Cf. C. Friethoff, "Utrum B.V. Maria meruit portare Christum Dominum?" *Angelicum*, Rome, 10(1933), 181-94. ...Dicendum quod Beata Virgo dicitur meruisse portare Dominum Jesum Christum, non quia meruit Deum incarnari: sed quia meruit, ex gratia sibi data, illum puritatis et sanctitatis gradum ut congrue posset esse mater Dei.

Here, in the *Summa Theologiae*, the Angelic Doctor does not explicitly say Our Lady merited to be chosen as a participant in the already-decided-upon Incarnation but he does suggest it. She merited a degree of holiness. That holiness enabled her to be the Mother of God in a suitable, congruous manner. Much the same as "meriting *de congruo*."

St. Albert seems to have held the same as St. Thomas.<sup>102</sup>

St. Bonaventure, on the other hand, seems to attribute to the Blessed Virgin congruous merit in the order of execution, even as to the substance of the Incarnation. He says:

I say the Blessed Virgin Mary merited to conceive the Son of God by congruous merit before the Incarnation, because, by her exceeding purity and humility and benignity, she was suitable to be made the Mother of God. But after the annunciation, after she had consented and the Holy Spirit had descended on her with abundance of grace, she had not only congruity but worth ("dignitatem") and from that time, she merited not only *de congruo* but *de digno*, to be overshadowed and impregnated by the power of the Most High.<sup>103</sup>

For the Seraphic Doctor, she "merited to conceive the Son of God," means precisely that she merited, absolutely, the Divine Maternity and the substance of the Incarnation. This is proved from these words, which exclude only condign merit, not merit *de congruo* or *de digno*, and which immediately follow the above:

But she could not merit by condign merit to conceive the Son of God, because this exceeds all merit and also because this was the foundation of the very merit of the glorious Virgin. For whether we say God became man or we say a woman became the Mother of God, both are above the status which is owed to a creature and therefore the latter as much as the former came from benignity and grace. And therefore, as I have said, the just man can merit first grace for a sinner by the merit of dignity, not by condign merit, lest grace lose the nature of grace; so it can be conceded, that the Blessed Virgin merited the conception, not only by congruous merit, but by the merit of *dignity*, because through the copious grace of the Holy Spirit, she was not only *suitable* [*congrua*] for the conception, but was even *worthy* [*digna*] of it.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>102</sup> J. Bergmann, *Die Stellung der seligsten Jungfrau im Werke der Erlösung nach dem hl. Kirchenlehrer Albertus Magnus*. Freiburg i. B., 1936, 43-4.

<sup>103</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 2, q. 2, c.; III, 107b. Dico igitur, quod beata Virgo Maria concipere Filium Dei *ante incarnationem* meruit merito *congrui*, quoniam prae sua nimia puritate et humilitate et benignitate idonea erat, ut efficeretur Dei Mater. *Post annuntiationem* vero, postquam consensit, et Spiritus sanctus in copiositate gratiae in eam descendit, non solum habuit *congruitatem*, sed *dignitatem*; et ex tunc meruit non solum merito *congruitatis*, sed *dignitatis* obumbrari et impraegnari virtute Altissimi.

<sup>104</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 2, q. 2, c.; III, 107a. Sed merito *condigni* non potuit mereri concipere Filium Dei, pro eo quod hoc *excedit* omne meritum, et etiam, quia erat ipsius meriti gloriosae Virginis *fundamentum*. Sive enim dicamus, Deum fieri hominem, sive dicamus,

The merits of Our Lady brought it about that she was the cause of the Incarnation to the extent that God willed that its execution depend on her consent. St. Bonaventure seems to say as much when he repeats the words of St. Bernard: "For if you take the Mother of God from the world, as a consequence, you take away the Incarnate Word..."<sup>105</sup>

In addition, by meriting the Incarnation, Mary indirectly cooperated in the mystery of the Redemption.

This should be held about the manner of the Incarnation, that, at the message of the angel announcing to the most Blessed Virgin Mary the mystery of the Incarnation, which was to take place within her, the Virgin believed, desired, and consented ... The key to understanding the aforementioned is: since the Incarnation is a work emanating from a first principle, in so far as it is reparative in a manner which is most fitting, most universal, and most complete. It befits his wisdom to operate suitably, it befits his generosity to operate universally and his strength to operate completely. Therefore, since the Incarnation is from a first principle achieving reparation in a most suitable manner and a suitable manner is that the medicine be the opposite of the disease, the reparation, of the fall, and the remedy, of the wound.<sup>106</sup>

Not only she who conceived and nursed him is blessed, but also they who follow her. And who are these? Those who hear the word of God and fulfill it. Eve, having transgressed the commandment of God, destroyed the house, which God had prepared for our salvation but the wise woman [Mary] built the house and repaired our salvation.<sup>107</sup>

mulierem fieri matrem Dei, utrumque est super statum, qui debetur creaturae; et ideo tam hoc quam illud fuit benignitatis et gratiae. Et propterea, sicut dixi, quod gratiam primam potest mereri justus peccatori merito *dignitatis*, non merito *condigni*, ne gratia perderet rationem gratiae; sic potest concedi, quod beata Virgo non tantum merito *congrui*, sed merito *dignitatis* meruit conceptionem, quia per copiosam gratiam Spiritus sancti ad conceptionem illam non solum *congrua*, sed etiam *digna* fuit.

<sup>105</sup> Bernard, *De Nat. B.M.V.*, *sermo 1*, n. 6; PL 183, 441; Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V.*, *sermo 2*; IX, 709a. "Si enim tollis Matrem Dei de mundo, per consequens tollis Verbum incarnatum;..."

<sup>106</sup> Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, p. 4, c. 3; V, 243ab. De *modo* incarnationis hoc tenendum est, quod Angelo nuntiante beatissimae Virgini Mariae mysterium incarnationis perficiendum in ipsa, Virgo credidit, appetiit et consensit; ... Ratio autem ad intelligentiam praedictorum haec est: quia incarnatio est opus manans a primo principio, inquantum est reparativum modo *congruentissimo*, *communissimo*, et *completissimo*. Decet enim eius *sapientiam* operari *congrue*, decet eius *largitatem* operari *communiter*, et *virtutem*, operari *perfecte*. Quoniam ergo est a primo principio reparante modo *congruentissimo*; et congruus modus est, quod medicina ex opposito respondeat morbo, et reparatio lapsui, et remedium nocumento; ...

<sup>107</sup> Bonaventure, *De donis Spiritus sancti*, coll. 6, n. 7; 485a. Non solum ipsa beata est, quae ipsum concepit et lactavit, sed etiam qui eam sequuntur. Et qui sunt illi? Qui audiunt verbum Dei et implent illud. Eva, transgressa mandatum Dei, destruxit domum, quam Deus nobis praeparavit ad salutem; sed mulier sapiens [Maria. L. Gl.] aedificavit donum et reparavit salutem nostram.

The Seraphic Doctor was following Catholic tradition, especially St. Irenaeus, in saying Mary held the place in the work of human restitution which Eve had held in the Fall. God was glorified and the greatness of Christ's Redemption was exalted more through the antithetic opposition of having the work of salvation follow the same road as the work of human destruction. "Just as Eve, by freely yielding to the wiles of the wicked angel, became the cause of universal death, so Mary, through the consent given to the good angel, became the cause of our salvation."<sup>108</sup>

On Mary's predestination and the impossibility of her meriting it *de condigno*, the two great Doctors seem to be in considerable agreement. St. Thomas' position is clear from his scientific works, the *Commentary on the Sentences* and the *Summa Theologiae*. St. Bonaventure's position has to be gathered, to a great extent, from sermons and devotional works, seen in the light of his overall conservatism.

There is some disagreement between them about the kind of congruous merit Mary had and how early in the work of the Incarnation that merit came into play. For St. Thomas, she had only congruous merit, with no further qualification, and she only merited that, once the Incarnation was already decreed, that it take place through her. St. Bonaventure says she had a special kind of congruous merit, *de digno*, "worthy merit," still depending on the benignity and free gift of God, and that, in some way, she merited the Incarnation itself and not just that she be chosen for a role in it.

There are differences in details. While both saints say, "congruous merit," St. Bonaventure has a special kind of congruous merit and says Mary merited by (general) congruous merit, the Incarnation itself. In the overall picture, both say the Incarnation was a work of pure divine generosity and neither Mary, nor even Jesus, could truly merit it. A basic agreement between them, with secondary disagreements.

If, however, we accept what the distinguished editors of Quaracchi say, that St. Bonaventure means by "congruous merit" what St. Thomas means by "condign merit,"<sup>109</sup> then there would be a greater difference, St. Bonaventure holding a very high degree of merit in Our Lady, which St. Thomas explicitly denies her. At least after the Annunciation, she was not only suitable (*congrua*) but worthy (*digna*). Of course, *after* the Annunciation, (if we include her response to the angel) the Incarnation had already taken place. Also, the concept

<sup>108</sup> Chietini 53; Bonaventure, *Brevil.*, p. 4, c. 3; V, 243b.

<sup>109</sup> Quaracchi editors, "Scholion," in Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d. 27, a. 2, q. 2; II, p. 665. See above, p. 114.

of a creature, however immaculate, meriting the basis of all merit, the Incarnation, is troubling to me.

A different conclusion might be possible, if a bit strained. The distinguished Quaracchi editors did say in one place (not explicitly here) that St. Thomas' "condign" and Bonaventure's "congruous" differed only in word. Bonaventure says that, *before the Incarnation*, Mary merited congruously to conceive the Son of God. Could he mean "before, in the order of intention?" If we took it in that sense and took his "congruously" as equivalent to St. Thomas' "condignly," as the Quaracchi editors tell us, we should have a very surprising conclusion. But grace is the basis of merit and the Incarnation is the basis of grace. It seems highly illogical to say Mary merited that which is the basis of all merit and I prefer to understand St. Bonaventure's words in such a way as to avoid that improbable conclusion. They can more easily be so understood.

Leaving aside the highly improbable, the most reasonable conclusion is that the two Saints agree that the Incarnation, the Divine Maternity, and Mary's initial sanctification in the womb were gratuitously predestined. When she cooperated with this gratuitously given grace, she merited congruously that the already-decided-upon Incarnation take place through her, the holiest person available. St. Bonaventure goes on to say she had a very high degree of congruous merit. St. Thomas does not disagree.

## 2. Preparation

This second division of the first chapter, Part Two, of the dissertation will be divided into A) preparation in body and B) preparation in soul.

### PREPARATION IN BODY

#### Virginité

#### Virginité in conceiving

- In Catholic doctrine

The perhaps most popular titles for Mary refer to her virginity: "La Virgen," "die Jungfrau," "La bonne sainte vierge." St Epiphanius asks who, in any age, pronounces the name of St. Mary without adding, spontaneously, "the Virgin."<sup>110</sup> Albert the Great points out that she alone unites bodily virginity and fecundity with spiritual virginity and fecundity.<sup>111</sup> These words of thought-

<sup>110</sup> Ildefonso de la Inmaculada, "La maternidad divina de Maria, fundamento de la piedad mariana," *Estudios Marianos*, 48(1983): p. 70.

<sup>111</sup> Albert the Great, *Mariale*, q. 142, ad 5; ed. Jammy, t. XX, p. 95.

ful devotion are ultimately founded on the words of Matthew and, even more, Luke:

Mary's words, "How can this be since I have no husband?" (Luke 1:34), recall her commitment to serve the Lord with the undivided love of a virginal heart. A human father was not necessary for the eternal Son: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you (Luke 1:35)".<sup>112</sup>

Fr. Jelly continues, saying, about Our Lady's virginity:

Closely connected with the Bible's portrait of Mary as the mother of Jesus is its treatment of her virginity. The infancy narratives in the Gospels clearly communicate the belief that Christ was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit overshadowing Mary's womb without the intervention of any human father. St. Matthew makes the point in the context of Joseph's dream (cf. Matt. 1: 20-25) and St. Luke in the angelic response to Mary's question (cf. Luke 1:34)

That Mary conceived Christ solely through the power of the Spirit is a dogma of the Catholic faith. True, it has never been solemnly defined as such by the extraordinary magisterium of a pope or ecumenical council. But it is a dogma, founded on the words of Scripture, as understood and constantly taught by the universal and ordinary teaching authority of the Church.

The Fathers provide ample testimony to Mary's virginal conception of Christ. St. Ignatius of Antioch taught it as a certain truth of the faith and even referred to it as a distinct mystery: "And the prince of this world was in ignorance of the virginity of Mary and her childbearing and also of the death of the Lord – three mysteries loudly proclaimed to the world, though accomplished in the stillness of God. The second-century apologist St. Justin Martyr interpreted Mary's virginal conception of Jesus as a fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 7: 14. St. Irenaeus considered it to be a part of what he called the "canon of truth." Later, in the third century, Tertullian included it in the "rule of faith," that is, a body of truth transmitted in the Church by Sacred Scripture and tradition. The doctrine was incorporated into the universal conciliar creed promulgated by the First Council of Constantinople in 381.<sup>113</sup>

The Church also teaches Our Lady's virginity endured through the birth of Christ and throughout her life. And the Catholic Church teaches this as a *fact*, a fact imbued with spiritual significance, but not as a mere spiritual symbol:

Accepting by faith Mary's perpetual virginity as a fact, one should humbly seek out the meaning that makes it a fruitful mystery, and much more than a physical fact. Its miraculous character is only the starting point for our reflection on this aspect of God's saving plan for us. Unless we see this we might miss the meaning of Mary's virginity. Moreover, to interpret the dogmas as a purely spiritual symbol or as a myth, would be to fail to recognize the crucial historical dimension of

<sup>112</sup> Jelly, "The Mother of Jesus," *The Teaching of Christ*, eds. D. Wuerl, R. Lawler, T. Lawler (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor: 1995) p.92.

<sup>113</sup> Jelly,, "The Mother of Jesus," pp. 96, 97.

Christian faith. Our faith seeks to contemplate the spiritual significance of real historical events.<sup>114</sup>

Fr. Carroll agrees:

Although it has been challenged by many Christians, and of late even by a few Catholics, one has only to consult the documents of the recent Council, Pope Paul's letter of early 1974, the American Bishops' joint pastoral on Our Lady of November, 1973, to see that the virginal conception is ordinary and consonant Catholic doctrine.<sup>115</sup>

• St. Thomas' Teaching on Our Lady's Virginity in Conceiving

In accordance with his Christocentric approach to the mystery of Mary, he saw her virginity, like all her privileges, as preparation for the Incarnation and her Divine Motherhood. "The various aspects of the marian mystery, her sanctification, her virginity, her espousals and the annunciation, are all viewed as a preparation for the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us for our redemption."<sup>116</sup> Our Lady's bodily preparation involved chiefly her virginity. According to J. Bover, many of the Fathers of the Church believed she had a "transcendent virginity," including gifts of spirit and flesh, heart and emotion, which kept her from any carnal inclination or seed of sensuality. They held this "transcendent virginity" was the disposition which oriented Mary to a Divine Maternity.<sup>117</sup>

St. Thomas does not seem to share that belief, although he may express similar thoughts in a different way, for instance, under the headings of predestination and sanctification. He does hold she was kept from all sensual inclination: in her, the "fomes," the tinder of concupiscence was bound at her sanctification in the womb and totally removed at the time she conceived her Son.<sup>118</sup> While not speaking of "transcendent virginity," he believed a virgin birth was appropriate for Our Lord. Since he was the true and natural Son of God, it was fitting that he have no father other than God, in order that the dignity of God the Father not be transferred to another.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>114</sup> Jelly, "The Mother of Jesus," p. 98.

<sup>115</sup> E. Carroll, "Mary, the mother of Jesus," p. 84.

<sup>116</sup> Jelly, "St. Thomas' theological interpretation of the 'Theotokos' and Vatican II's hierarchy of truths of Catholic doctrine," p. 223,

<sup>117</sup> J. Bover, "Como conciben los Santos Padres el misterio de la divina maternidad. La virginidad, llave de la maternidad divina." *Estudios Marianos*, 8 (1949)189-231.

<sup>118</sup> Aquinas, III, 27, 3, c.

<sup>119</sup> Aquinas, III, 28, 1, c.



Also, the virginal conception and birth showed forth some of the spiritual generation of the Divine Word. A word is conceived and brought forth without damaging the speaker. It calls attention to the fullness of perfection in the speaker. The Word of God not only corrupts nothing; it is he through whom all things were made and by whom all are conceived in their integrity. Therefore, it was fitting that his human generation not corrupt his mother's integrity, but that her virginity be preserved.<sup>120</sup>

Mary's virginity was not only preserved at the conception of Christ and at his birth but forever after. Calling the opposite the detestable error of Helvidius, St. Thomas gives four reasons for rejecting that teaching: first, that it would derogate from the dignity of Christ, who ought to be the only offspring of his mother as he was of his Divine Father; second, it would insult the Holy Spirit, who made her womb his sanctuary; third, it would lessen the dignity and sanctity of the Mother of God, seeing her as not content with so great a son and so careless of her miraculously preserved virginity; fourth, it would accuse Joseph of great presumption, in presuming to violate her who conceived God by the Holy Spirit.<sup>121</sup>

Further comments in support of St. Thomas – and of St. Bonaventure – are offered by Fr. E. Carroll:

Since the fourth century there has been agreement that Mary remained always a virgin. St. Jerome (d. 420) faced up to the biblical objections of the "brethren" of the Savior and showed the inconclusiveness of Scripture here. Our Lady's lifelong virginity, as an aspect of her exclusive dedication to the motherhood of the Savior and to his saving work, argues no disrespect for sex and marriage and the family, even if examples can be adduced of excessively ascetic interpretations by Catholics.<sup>122</sup>

Fr. Carroll goes on to point out Our Lady's example to consecrated virgins and celibates.<sup>123</sup>

• St. Bonaventure on Mary's Virginity in Conceiving

Mary conceived by the direct action of God, who supplied the paternal element.<sup>124</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor tried to investigate thoroughly the nature of this mystery, first establishing the fact of the conception without human help, then ask-

<sup>120</sup> Aquinas, *C. Gent.*, 4, 45.

<sup>121</sup> Aquinas, III, 28, 3, c.

<sup>122</sup> E. Carroll, "Mary, the mother of Jesus," p. 84.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> Chietini, p. 24.

ing how God had acted on the Blessed Virgin. From these came the conclusion: Mary is Virgin Mother.

Holy Scripture clearly states that no man had any part in Christ's conception. Matthew says, "That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit."<sup>125</sup> Luke, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you."<sup>126</sup> St. Bonaventure explains the child will be conceived "not by the seed of man but by the power of the Holy Spirit."<sup>127</sup> When explaining Genesis 2:5-6, "... There was no man to till the soil, but a stream was welling up out of the earth and was watering all the surface of the ground,"<sup>128</sup> he said, "That soil which no one tilled, was the Virgin untouched by man, upon whom descended and from whom again ascended the fountain of living water and the river of divine grace."<sup>129</sup> Elsewhere, "This earth received no human action to conceive the Son of God; but was irrigated by the water of the Holy Spirit. For thus you read: 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, etc.'"<sup>130</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor applied to the virginal conception what was said about the building of the Temple in Jerusalem: "... No hammer, ax, or iron tool was to be heard in the temple during its construction,"<sup>131</sup> saying, "The Virgin Mary was made the temple of the Son of God through the omnipotence of divine power without the clatter of human activity."<sup>132</sup> He takes the prophecy of Isaias, "Behold, the virgin shall conceive, precisely as signifying Mary's virginal conception, "that she would be at the same time virgin and conceiving. Otherwise, she would not have been given as a sign to the inhabitants of Jerusalem."<sup>133</sup> The Franciscan master cites the authority of the Creed: "Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary."<sup>134</sup> and that of St. John Damascene and Hugh of St. Victor.<sup>135</sup>

The Saint also proves from reason that it was fitting for Christ to be conceived by no human father.<sup>136</sup> This fittingness is evident from the purpose of the Incarnation. Since the Word descended to earth to redeem both sexes, it was appropriate that each sex have a part in the work of our salvation. Thus,

<sup>125</sup> RSV 1:20.

<sup>126</sup> RSV 1:35.

<sup>127</sup> Bonaventure, *Comm. Evgl. Lc*, c. 1, n. 62; VII 25a; Chietini 24.

<sup>128</sup> New American Bible.

<sup>129</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M.V.*, sermo 3; IX 669b.

<sup>130</sup> Bonaventure, *Vitis mystica seu tract. de Passione Domini*, c. 1, n. 2; IX 160ab; Chietini 25.

<sup>131</sup> I Kings, 6:7 New American Bible.

<sup>132</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.M.V.*, sermo 4; IX 651b.

<sup>133</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M.V.*, sermo 2; IX 663b.

<sup>134</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4; III 117b. *Ibid.*, a. 1, q. 1, fund. 1; III 98b.

<sup>135</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 1, q. 2, ad 1; III 101ab. *Ibid.*, ad opp. 1; III 189a.

<sup>136</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 13, a. 3, , q. 2, c; III 272ab.

on the one hand, the Son of God took on the male sex and, on the other, took his human origin solely from woman.

To the objection that he came to save both sexes equally, it must be said that is true. Nevertheless the male sex should have been given greater weight, as the more worthy. (The medieval friar believed that gender to be of greater dignity.) He assumed the male sex, since that was more fitting. But since woman ought in no way to have been excluded from the abundance ("sufficiencia") of his redemption, therefore he took flesh from woman.—Thus that division is not sufficient which says either he ought to have assumed both sexes or assumed from both sexes. There is a middle ground: or assumed one from the other, as, male from female. That is as good ("tunc tantum valet") as taking from both and is more in agreement with right reason.<sup>137</sup>

The contrast between the Fall and the Redemption shows the wonder of our salvation in a clearer light. Just as in the struggle leading to perdition, the Fall began with a woman and was completed by a man, so also in the Redemption:

The fourth reason [why it was fitting that Christ took flesh from woman alone, is<sup>138</sup>] because of the parallel between the Reparation and the Fall. As the Fall took place in both sexes but began with the woman and was completed in the man, so would it be in the Reparation. The woman, believing and conceiving, would begin to overcome the devil in secret. Later, her Son would conquer him publicly in a duel, that is on the gibbet of the cross.<sup>139</sup>

Also, the completion of the universe, in regard to the production of human life, required a conception by the woman alone. Before the birth of Christ, there had been three modes of human origin. Adam proceeded from neither sex, since he was directly formed by God. Eve came from man alone. All other humans were generated from both sexes. There was still another possibility, production from woman alone. This would complete the universe, according to St. Bonaventure. This was not absolutely necessary but, with it, the world would be more perfect.

It was fitting to the completion of the universe to introduce a fourth mode, which, to wit, would be from the woman without male seed, through the power of the Supreme Being.<sup>140</sup>

It is to be said that that fourth mode of producing a human being is not of the completion of the universe, but beyond the perfection of the universe.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>137</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 12, a. 3, q. 2, ad 3; III 273ab.

<sup>138</sup> Chietini, p. 26.

<sup>139</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 12, a. 3, q. 2, c.; III, 272b.

<sup>140</sup> Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, p.4, c. 3; V, 244a.

<sup>141</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 1, a. 2, q. 2, ad 9; III, 27b.

From this (defect) it would not follow that the universe would lack its completion.<sup>142</sup>

Another very important reason is at hand. In being born of woman alone, Christ bestowed a high dignity on his mother, that of Virgin-Mother. This, Chietтини states, explains why, in Scripture, the work of the Incarnation is attributed to the Holy Spirit. This action, like all works *ad extra*, is common to all three Persons of the Holy Trinity. But since there is a close connection between this Mystery and the personal properties and the names appropriated to the Third Person, it is attributed to the Holy Spirit. The Incarnation is the result of divine goodness and love, characteristic of the Third Person.<sup>143</sup>

The reason on which St. Bonaventure chiefly insists is that attributing this mystery to the Holy Spirit better expresses the holiness of Mary's conception. By conceiving in conjunction with God Himself, she was kept from the corruption of the concupiscence naturally connected with human generation and, under the influence of divine rather than human love, miraculously bore Jesus Christ.<sup>144</sup>

#### • The Role of the Holy Spirit

The above kind of explanation, while it gives a reason why the Incarnation is attributed to the Holy Spirit, at the same time shows the divine principle in the conception of Christ is entirely different from a created father. To investigate further the manner in which the Holy Spirit cooperated in Christ's generation is to search into the deepest roots of the mystery of the virginal maternity of the God-bearer. Therefore, St. Bonaventure expounds the role of the Holy Spirit in the birth of the Lord.<sup>145</sup> The Third Person of the Holy Trinity, being an agent of infinite power, acted in the generation of the Savior, in a manner more perfect than that of the male principle in other conceptions.<sup>146</sup> He did not act in the same way, because he produced Christ outside the way of generation.

Two things are required to constitute an act of generation, according to the Seraphic Doctor: that someone produce some being and that he produce it in such a way that it arise similar to himself in nature and form. "As to the objection that it is the father who brings a thing to existence, it must be said that is

<sup>142</sup> Bonaventure, *ibid.* Cf. *III Sent.* d. 12, a. 3, q. 2, c; III, 272a.

<sup>143</sup> Chietтини, p. 27.

<sup>144</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 1, q. 1, c; III, 99a; Chietтини, p. 28.

<sup>145</sup> Chietтини, p. 28.

<sup>146</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 1, c; III, 111b; Cf. *ibid.*, q. 2, ad 2; III, 114b.

not the whole character of a father. It is necessary that he agree in the nature and form according to which he brings the thing into existence."<sup>147</sup>

For St. Bonaventure, to have the nature of a father is the same as to generate.

Generating is different from making, since "to make" indicates an operation of effective power or of an efficient cause, especially through the will; but "to generate" indicates the production of something in the manner of nature, especially when attention is paid to the bringing of the thing into being. Therefore, it is in no way conceded that [the Holy Spirit] generated Christ, since He formed Him from the Virgin through His power and grace.<sup>148</sup>

The first element of generation is found in the Holy Spirit in relation to Christ, for, as the principal cause, He did educe into existence the human nature of Christ. But the other element is lacking for he did not produce it like to himself in nature and form. The reason is that he did not communicate anything of his own substance to Christ, since the whole matter of the conception was taken from the Blessed Virgin.<sup>149</sup> Though it says in the Creed that Christ was conceived "de Spiritu Sancto," we must remember the preposition "de" is not to be understood substantially or materially but creatively<sup>150</sup> "That flesh [of Christ] was created not by seed but by being established."<sup>151</sup>

Chietini says the expression of St. John of Damascus, that the Holy Spirit descended on the Blessed Virgin after the manner of seed, causes no difficulty, since here "seed" indicates the active power of the Holy Spirit and in no way designates any material substance.<sup>152</sup> And, to the objection that the Holy Spirit did produce something similar to himself in nature and form, because Christ, by reason of his divine nature, was perfectly similar to the Holy Spirit, he says the answer is easy: the Holy Spirit is the principle of Christ's conception only according to his human nature.<sup>153</sup>

For to the objection that the Virgin is called mother and the Holy Spirit father, it should be said that it is not the same, because the Virgin is conformed to Christ in nature, according to his conception in time; but the Holy Spirit, although he is like Christ in nature, he is not, however, a principle according to that nature.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 1, q. 2, ad 2; III, 101b.

<sup>148</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d.4; III, 118b.

<sup>149</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 1, q. 2, c; III, 101a.

<sup>150</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4 ; III, 118a.

<sup>151</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1; III, 80a. "Caro illa [Christi] creata est non seminaliter sed conditive."

<sup>152</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 1, q. 2, ad 1; III, 101ab.

<sup>153</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 1, q. 2, ad 3 and 4; III, 101b.

<sup>154</sup> Bonaventure, *ibid.*, ad 4. Quod enim quod objicit. ....quod Virgo dicitur mater, et quod Spiritus sanctus pater; dicendum est quod non est simile, quia Virgo conformatur Christo in

The power by which the Third Person of the Trinity caused the conception of Christ is properly called, not "generative," but "formative," or "creative".<sup>155</sup> We say, "creative," not in the strictest sense, "productive 'ex nihilo.'" There is a sentence of John Damascene, in Peter Lombard's translation, "[The Word] joined flesh to himself from the purest blood of the Virgin, not by inseminating, but creating through the Holy Spirit."<sup>156</sup> In explaining this sentence, St. Bonaventure says:

By the "act of creation," [the Damascene] did not intend to say that that flesh was made *ex nihilo*, but that it was brought to perfection by an infinite power.<sup>157</sup>

Scripture also shows the action of the Spirit was creative rather than generative. It says Christ was "factum ex muliere"<sup>158</sup> and "natum ex Virgine," ["made of a woman" and "born of the Virgin"] to show that the generation was only on Mary's side.<sup>159</sup>

Since the Holy Spirit placed no generative act, it follows that he acquired no relation of paternity through causing the conception of Christ.<sup>160</sup> By causing the conception of Christ, the Holy Spirit did not become his father in any true or proper sense. But we might ask whether the Holy Spirit or the whole Trinity might *improperly* be called "father of Christ," whether by nature or by grace. And, consequently, whether Christ might *improperly* be called Son of the Trinity or Son of the Holy Spirit. St. Thomas rejects such talk entirely. Alexander of Hales, on the other hand, says Christ, by reason of creation, could be called the Son of the Trinity.<sup>161</sup> St. Bonaventure agrees with St. Thomas in rejecting this expression but disagrees with him in saying it cannot be proven to be intrinsically repugnant [L. Gl.: a.v. "self-contradictory"]. The great Dominican says there is in Christ only one Person, which takes its origin solely from the

natura, secundum quam conceptus est ex tempore; Spiritus autem sanctus, quamvis Christo sit similis in natura, non tamen est principium secundum illam. Bonaventure, *ibid.*, Chiettni p. 29, n. 89.

<sup>155</sup> Chiettni, p.29.

<sup>156</sup> *De fide orthodoxa*, l. 3, c. 2, PG 94, 986; Lombard, *III Sent.*, d. 3, c. 1, ed. Quaracchi 1916, 558, Chiettni, p.29, n. 90. "Coplavit sibi [Verbum] ex ...purissimis ...Virginis sanguinibus ... carnem non seminans, sed per Spiritum Sanctum creans."

<sup>157</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 1, ad 2; III, 112b. Cf. also *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1; III, 80a. Chiettni, p. 29, n. 90. Per actum creationis non intendit dicere [Damascenus], quod caro illa facta fuerit ex nihilo, sed quod ad perfectionem deducta est per virtutem infinitam

<sup>158</sup> RSV Galatians 4:4, "born of woman."

<sup>159</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d.4, a.3, q. 1, c; III, 112a; Chiettni, p. 30.

<sup>160</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 1, q. 2, ad 1; III, 101ab; *ibid.* in corp; III, 101a; *ibid.* ad 2, 3, and 4; III, 101b; Chiettni, p. 30.

<sup>161</sup> Aquinas, *Summa*, p. III, q. 8, m. 3, a. 4; Venice, 1575; Chiettni. 30, n. 92; Hales, *S. Theol* p. 3, q. 8, m. 3, a. 4.

Father. This Divine Person takes its nature<sup>162</sup> from the whole Trinity but it still cannot be called "Son of the Trinity because of the repugnance found in the Person. And this repugnance is eternal."<sup>163</sup>

We must consider that what is said of someone according to a perfect basis, ought not to be said of him according to an imperfect basis: just as, because Socrates is said to be a man according to the proper nature of man, he is never said to be a man according to the meaning by which a picture of a man is called a man, although perchance he is like another man. But Christ is the Son of God according to the perfect nature of filiation. Therefore, although he is created and justified according to human nature, he ought not to be called a son of God either by reason of creation nor by reason of justification: but only by reason of the eternal generation, according to which he is the Son of the Father alone. And therefore in no way must Christ be said to be the son of the Holy Spirit nor even of the whole Trinity.<sup>164</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor says in reply that, if this were true, the Divine Maternity would have to be denied. For, if there is in Christ's Person, a relation of filiation to Mary, then there is no reason the same thing could not happen in reference to the Trinity.<sup>165</sup> St. Thomas' answer to that would be, of course, that there is in Christ no real relation of filiation to his mother. There is a real relation of motherhood to Christ in Mary and, on the basis of that, we *think* of Christ as if he were related to Mary. This is a mental, not a real relation.<sup>166</sup> St. Bonaventure rejects this expression, "Christ is the son of the Holy Spirit or of the Holy Trinity in the improper sense," not as absolutely false but as leading to error.<sup>167</sup> Here we have a real difference between the Angelic and Seraphic Doctors. St. Thomas holds it as completely false. This is a rather minor difference, certainly to modern eyes, and even in the medieval milieu, in view of the wide agreement on the virginal conception.

<sup>162</sup> that is, its *human* nature -- III, 32, 3, c.

<sup>163</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 4., q. 1, a. 2; Venice, 1593, VII, 18cd, *Summa*, III, q. 32, a. 3; Rome, 1903, XI, 335a, ff.

<sup>164</sup> Aquinas, III, q.32, a.3 c. Est autem considerandum quod illud quod de aliquo dicitur secundum perfectam rationem, non est dicendum de eo secundum rationem imperfectam: sicut, quia sicut Socrates dicitur homo secundum propriam rationem hominis, numquam dicitur homo secundum illam significationem qua pictura hominis dicitur homo, licet forte ipse assimiletur alteri homini. Christus autem est Filius Dei secundum perfectam rationem filiationis. Unde, quamvis secundum humanam naturam sit creatus et justificatus, non tamen debet dici filius Dei neque ratione creationis, neque ratione justificationis: sed solum ratione generationis aeternae, secundum quam est Filius Patris solius. Et ideo nullo modo debet dici Christus filius Spiritus Sancti: nec etiam totius Trinitatis.

<sup>165</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 1, q. 2, c; III 103a.

<sup>166</sup> Cf. above.

<sup>167</sup> Chietтини, 30, n. 92.

Thus, the Holy Spirit, acting outside the way of generation, on the one hand, did not take away from Mary the character of mother, and, on the other, preserved, at the same time, her privilege of virginity.<sup>168</sup> The conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, by reason of immediate cooperation with an agent purely spiritual and of infinite sanctity, was free of corruption and of concupiscence, was thoroughly holy and unpolluted.<sup>169</sup>

In human conception, the defilement of concupiscence is usually present and, through this, original sin. Lest that be said of the conception of Christ, he was said to have been conceived of the Holy Spirit. To exclude carnal intercourse, he is said to be conceived of the Spirit. To exclude the defilement of concupiscence, he is not said to be conceived, not only of the Spirit, but of the Holy Spirit ... It was divine love which especially prepared the Virgin for the conception of her Son. Whence, insofar as a woman conceives through the pleasure of a man and her own adherence, which is with the desire and love of the generative power; so the blessed Virgin, because of the singularity of love, singularly conceived God of God.<sup>170</sup>

Just as in any other conception, so in the generation of Christ, two agents are found, the principal and the secondary. But, since in Christ, the principal agent was divine, operating according to its infinite perfection, not by way of generation, but working by means of a formative and generative power, it did not contract a relation of paternity to Christ, and still did not keep the Blessed Virgin from becoming a true mother, by exercising her natural causality. Indeed, the Holy Spirit, by his immediate cooperation, was the cause why Mary not only was made a mother but also remained a virgin. Since it is now established that Mary is a mother in the true and proper sense of this word, we are now ready to prove she is the Mother of God.<sup>171</sup>

### Virginity of Mary in Giving Birth

#### • General Background on the Question

Fr. Jelly reviews some of the testimony to Mary's virginity in giving birth:

The Church proclaims that Mary gave birth to Jesus in a virginal way. "She brought Him forth without the loss of virginity, even as she conceived him without the loss of virginity ...it was a miraculous birth [*The Tome of Leo*]." His birth was exceptional. He was truly our brother and truly born of a woman; He was born to a most poor and humble life. But the gifts of grace were allowed to touch this moment. St. Augustine says: "A virgin who conceives, a virgin who gives

<sup>168</sup> Chiettni, p. 30.

<sup>169</sup> Chiettni, p. 30.

<sup>170</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 1. q. 1, c; III, 99a; Chiettni, p. 30, n. 93.

<sup>171</sup> Chiettni, p. 31.



birth; a virgin with Child, a virgin delivered of Child – a virgin ever virgin! Why do you marvel at these things, O man? When God vouchsafed to become man, it was fitting that He should be born in this way. He who was made of her, had made her what she was.”<sup>172</sup>

Mary’s virginity in the act of childbirth is stated, in 390 A.D., in a letter from the Synod of Milan, signed by St. Ambrose and others, to Pope Siricius.

“This is the virgin who conceived in her womb and as a virgin bore a son.... He [Isaiah] has said not only that a virgin shall conceive but also that a virgin shall give birth...The portal is the blessed Mary of whom it is written that ‘the Lord shall pass through it and it shall be closed’ after birth, because a virgin did conceive and give birth.”<sup>173</sup>

St. Augustine says, “She had conceived without male seed, brought forth without corruption, retained her integrity after childbirth.”<sup>174</sup> Pope Leo the Great wrote, in 449, to the Archbishop of Constantinople: “She brought him forth without the loss of virginity, even as she conceived him without loss.”<sup>175</sup> Certain Eastern Fathers of the fourth century testify to this repeatedly, especially Epiphanius, Basil, Gregory Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa. “Generally speaking, the Western Fathers emphasized the preservation of Mary’s bodily integrity, while the Eastern Fathers stressed the aspect of her joy and freedom from pain in giving birth to Jesus.”<sup>176</sup>

Albert Mitterer, in *Dogma und Biologie der heiligen Familie* <sup>177</sup>, disagreed with some of the tradition concerning the bodily integrity. “Mitterer was of the opinion that to deny the opening of Mary’s womb and its ordinary consequences is to compromise the realism of her motherhood. His interpretation seems to empty the doctrine of any content in its traditional understanding.”<sup>178</sup>

Jesus took his flesh from his mother, like any developing unborn child. But he could not be said to be made from her or born of her, if he passed through her as through a channel. Hilda Graef uses this teaching, defined as of faith, to question another *de fide* doctrine, virginity *in partu*, virginity in the act of childbearing. Graef says all mothers are wounded by birth. To deny this in the case of Mary, she repeats, is to deny her true motherhood. She apparently makes no attempt to reconcile her strong views with the *de fide* doctrine of the Church that Mary was virginal *in partu* and *post partum*, as well as *ante*

<sup>172</sup> Jelly, “The Mother of Jesus,” p. 97.

<sup>173</sup> *Epist.* 42, 4; PL 16:1125-1126; Jelly, *Madonna*, 84.

<sup>174</sup> Augustine, *Sermo* 215, 3; PL 38:1073, cited M. O’Carroll, *Theotokos*.

<sup>175</sup> *Denzinger* 291, 294; Jelly, 84.

<sup>176</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, 84.

<sup>177</sup> Vienna, 1952.

<sup>178</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, 85.

*partum*.<sup>179</sup> Graef quotes in her favor A. Mitterer, O. Semmelroth, D. Ryan, and J. Galot, mentioning K. Rahner. Against her view, she cites R. Laurentin and Gregory of Nyssa.<sup>180</sup> She refers the reader to Guerard des Lauriers, de Aldama, and Jouassard.<sup>181</sup> And the two indexes to her two volumes (*Mary*), mention virginity *in partu* in many places.

Karl Rahner attempted to answer the concerns of Mitterer while still preserving the doctrine of Mary's virginity during childbirth. His conclusion was this:

...We by no means affirm, with Mitterer, that these particularities<sup>182</sup> never existed. All we say is this: Church doctrine affirms, with the real substance of tradition, that Mary's childbirth, as regards both child and mother, like the conception is, in its total reality, as the completely human act of this "virgin," in itself (and not just by reason of the conception, as Mitterer says), an act corresponding to the nature of this mother, and hence it is unique, miraculous, and "virginal." But this proposition, which is directly intelligible, does not offer us the possibility of deducing assertions about the concrete details of the process, which would be certain and universally binding.<sup>183</sup>

Fr. Jelly concludes, "...It seems to me that Rahner's approach is the most acceptable, since it both avoids any unbecoming way of addressing the delicate question, and also proposes content for the doctrine that is spiritually significant."<sup>184</sup>

#### • St. Thomas on Virginity in Birth

St. Thomas seems to follow the Western Fathers on this point, holding that Mary's womb was not opened. He quotes a sermon from the Council of Ephesus: "By nature, there is no virginity after birth. But grace showed her bringing forth, made her a mother, and did not harm her virginity." He says a word is conceived in the heart without corruption and also proceeds from the heart without corruption. Since Christ is the Word of God, it was fitting that he be born from the incorrupt womb of the Virgin, and he quotes another Ephesine sermon to the same effect. Also, since he came to take away our corruption, it was fitting that he not corrupt the virginity of his mother in being born.<sup>185</sup> In

<sup>179</sup> Graef, *Mary: a history of doctrine and devotion*. Westminster: Christian Classics and London: Sheed and Ward, 1985, Part I, 14-16.

<sup>180</sup> Graef, *Mary, ibid.* & Part I, pp. 66, 67.

<sup>181</sup> Graef, *Mary*, Part I, p.16.

<sup>182</sup> i.e. exemption from the details of childbirth - L.G.

<sup>183</sup> K. Rahner, "Virginitas in partu", *Theological Investigations*, IV, 162 [134-162].

<sup>184</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, 86.

<sup>185</sup> Aquinas, III, q. 28, a. 2, c.

answering the first objection in that article, he explains away St. Ambrose's use of the phrase, he "opened his mother's womb." Solving the article's third objection, he explains this is not to be explained by the gift of subtlety, which Christ did not enjoy before his passion, but happened miraculously, by divine power. In Question 35, article 6, c., the Saint tells us Christ was born without pain to the mother. The pain of birth is caused by the opening of the passages through which the infant goes out. Since Christ was born from a closed womb, there was no opening of these passages.

#### • St. Bonaventure on Virginity in Birth

St. Bonaventure is in full agreement with his great Dominican confrere, saying, "Thus he was brought into the light without any corruption, just as he was conceived without any contagion of lust."<sup>186</sup> Mary "brought forth without pain,"<sup>187</sup> "gave birth without sorrow."<sup>188</sup> Her son "sprang from her womb, but keeping intact the virginal seal."<sup>189</sup> Mary "is the closed gate, before birth and ...during birth."<sup>190</sup> The Gospel words "opening the womb," he refers to her fecundity, not to an actual opening.<sup>191</sup> And he cites Ezechiel 44:2.<sup>192</sup> Thomas, Bonaventure, and the Fathers of the Western Church seem to be totally at one on the "virginitas in partu."

#### Virginity after Birth

The Bishops of the United States, in *Behold Your Mother*, tell us it emerged clearly in the Church's consciousness in the fourth century, that Mary had no other children and never used her marital rights. Consecrated virgins and celibate monks found in her an example of virginal consecration to Christ. "By the time of the Council of Ephesus, 431 A.D., belief in the perpetual virginity of Mary was well formulated."<sup>193</sup>

<sup>186</sup> Bonaventure, *Lignum vitae*, fruct. 1, n. 4; VII, 171b.

<sup>187</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c; III, 62a.

<sup>188</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. Dni*, sermo 3; IX, 111b.

<sup>189</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, sermo 2; IX, 692b.

<sup>190</sup> Bonaventure, *Comm Evgl. Lc.*, c. 2, n. 53; VII, 56b.

<sup>191</sup> Bonaventure, *Comm. Evgl. Lc.*, c. 2, n. 53; VII, 56b.

<sup>192</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M.V.*, sermo 2; IX, 663b.

<sup>193</sup> National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Behold Your Mother: Woman of Faith* (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Catholic Conference, 1973), no. 49.

• St. Thomas on Virginité after Birth

The Angelic Doctor follows this exactly. In article three of the thirty-fifth question, Part Three of the *Summa*, he cites Ezechiel, 44:2, on the closed gate, and quotes from St. Augustine's commentary on it. Then he gives four reasons of fittingness: the only-begotten of his Father ought also to be the only-begotten of his mother, the womb sanctified by the Holy Spirit ought not to be violated by man, it would be ungrateful of Mary to want further children after so great a son or to surrender her miraculously preserved virginity, and finally it would be presumptuous of St. Joseph.

• St. Bonaventure on Virginité after Birth

The Seraphic Doctor agrees with the Angelic, holding Mary remained forever a virgin. What of Matthew 1:24, that Joseph did not know her until she had brought forth her firstborn son? Did Mary have further children? The Seraphic Doctor calls this the heresy of the Claudians<sup>194</sup> and, as Tavard says,<sup>195</sup> he is not soft with it: "It is an entirely irrational heresy that the most blessed Mother of God, from being the temple of God and of the Holy Spirit, turn to the work of the flesh. This could happen only to an impious and foolish soul, to believe such an indignity in the Mother of God."<sup>196</sup>

The closed gate of Ezechiel precludes this<sup>197</sup> as does the commendation from the cross of Mary to St. John. Why would Christ give him to Mary if she had other children?<sup>198</sup> As for the "brothers of the Lord," they are relatives in the second or third degree.<sup>199</sup> On the use of "brothers" and "sisters" for cousins, Tavard states: "One may remark that this is in fact the common practice in societies centered on the extended family. Only in the modern world of the twentieth century is the nuclear family the rule."<sup>200</sup>

• Agreement between the Two Doctors on Mary's virginity before, during, and after Birth

In all these matters, except the question of *how* false it would be to call Jesus the Son of the Trinity or of the Holy Spirit—they agree it would be

<sup>194</sup> *In IV Sent.*, d. 30, dub. IV; Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.7.

<sup>195</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 7.

<sup>196</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 30, dub. IV; IV, 712b; Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.7.

<sup>197</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 2; IX, 663b.

<sup>198</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 30; IV, 712b-13a.

<sup>199</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 30; IV, 713a; Chiettoni, pp. 171-2.

<sup>200</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.7.

false—the Angelic and Seraphic Doctor seem to be agreed. Now, still under “Preparation,” which is the second division of this chapter, and still concerning “Preparation in body,” the first section of that second division, let us consider the vow of virginity attributed to Mary.

#### Vow of Virginity:

- St. Thomas on the Vow of Virginity

Frederick M. Jelly, O.P. says, of Aquinas:

In a. 4 of the question on Mary’s virginity, St. Thomas states that we should not think that she made an irrevocable vow before she was betrothed to Joseph, even though she may have been so inclined. Before Christ was conceived virginally in her womb, Mary would have considered the law which insisted that men and women have children to spread their religion as God’s will for her. She waited upon God’s good judgment, which came at the Annunciation. “Afterwards, when she had taken a husband, the acceptable thing to do in those days, she with her husband, took a vow of virginity.” Apparently, Aquinas was sensitive to the pious tradition that Mary had vowed her virginity to God at a very early age. And so he does admit that there could have been a “conditional” vow, i.e., on the condition that it would be pleasing to God. Only when she came to learn through revelation that such a vow was part of God’s plans for her did she make it absolute.<sup>201</sup>

The Common Doctor says Mary had the intention of remaining a virgin and sealed it with a vow. But St. Thomas speaks of a vow only after the marriage to St. Joseph. Before that, he says she did not make an absolute vow, though she had a desire for virginity. *Not* making an absolute vow is not the same as *making* a conditional vow. Maybe she made no vow at all. St. Thomas says only: no *absolute* vow. Though he says she had a desire. And the desire which Mary had, according to him, was for *virginity* (“eam”) not for the vow (which would be “id”).

But to the contrary is what Augustine says in the book, *On Holy Virginity*: “To the announcing angel, Mary answered: “How shall this be, since I do not know man?” Which indeed she would not have said unless she had previously vowed herself a virgin to God.

...the works of perfection are more laudable if they are performed from a vow. But especially virginity in the Mother of God ought to stand out ...and therefore it was fitting that her virginity be consecrated to God from a vow.... The Mother of God is not believed to have vowed virginity absolutely before she married Joseph, although she desired it ...But afterward, having taken a spouse ...together with him pronounced a vow of virginity.<sup>202</sup>

<sup>201</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, 139.

<sup>202</sup> Aquinas, III, 28, 4, “sed contr” & c. Sed contra est quod Augustinus dicit, in libro *De Sancta Virginitate*: “Annuntianti angelo Maria respondit: ‘Quomodo fiet istud, quoniam virum

This vow, at first conditional upon God's will, was made absolute, together with St. Joseph, at the time of their espousal, before the Annunciation.

In answer to the first objection ("the preservation of virginity was against the commandment of the Old Law.") therefore it is to be said that it seemed prohibited by law not to do one's best to leave offspring upon the earth, therefore the Mother of God did not vow virginity simply, but under the condition, if it was pleasing to God. But after it was made known to her that this was pleasing to God, she vowed it absolutely, before the angel's Annunciation.<sup>203</sup>

In the same article,<sup>204</sup> in answer to the third objection, that, for those with a vow of virginity, marriage or the desire for marriage is damnable, St. Thomas answers: "...that word ...is to be understood of those who vow chastity absolutely. Which indeed the mother of God did not do before she married Joseph. But after the espousal, from a common will, she made a vow of virginity together with her spouse." The chronological order, according to the Angelic Doctor seems to be: desire for virginity, conditional vow of virginity, marriage to Joseph, absolute vow of virginity, Annunciation. St. Bonaventure will be seen to differ with this strongly.

The vow was fitting (*conveniens*), according to the Common Doctor, because the works of perfection are more laudable if they are done from a vow. This would have been a conditional vow<sup>205</sup> since the Law bound both men and women to have children in order to spread God's religion. After she took a husband, she made a vow of virginity together with him. "Only when she came to learn through revelation that such a vow was part of God's plan for her, did she make it absolute."<sup>206</sup> St. Thomas does not explain why she would take even a conditional vow against the Mosaic obligation, whether because of a new revelation or a deeper understanding of what was already revealed. He says St. Joseph had an intention of preserving virginity and that Mary was divinely

non cognosco?' Quod profecto non diceret, nisi se virginem Deo ante vovisset."

...perfectionis opera magis sunt laudabilia si ex voto celebrantur. Virginitas autem in Matre Dei praecipue debuit pollere: ...Et ideo conveniens fuit ut virginitas eius ex voto esset Deo consecrata.... Mater Dei non creditur, antequam desponsaretur Joseph, absolute virginitatem vovisse, licet eam in desiderio habuerit ...Postmodum vero, accepto sponso, ...simul cum eo votum virginitatis emisit.

<sup>203</sup> Aquinas, III, 28, 4, c. Ad primum ("servatio virginitatis erat contra praeceptum veteris legis.") ergo dicendum quod, quia videbatur esse lege prohibitum non dare operam ad relinquendum semen super terram, ideo non simpliciter virginitatem vovit Dei Genitrix, sed sub conditione, si Deo placeret. Postquam autem ei innotuit hoc esse Deo acceptum, absolute vovit, antequam ab Angelo annuntiaretur.

<sup>204</sup> Aquinas, III, 28, 4.

<sup>205</sup> cf. Jelly, *Madonna*, p.139.

<sup>206</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, p.139.

assured of this before the marriage.<sup>207</sup> After the marriage, he and his spouse vowed virginity together.<sup>208</sup>

R. Laurentin says some object that an intention of virginity would have been an anachronism. "The anachronism some insist upon is surely relative, since a half-century later virginity flourished as a rule more than as an exception, following the counsel of Paul in 1 Cor. 7:37...If someone was bound to make this discovery, or rather, take this step, who would be better suited for it than the woman destined to become the mother of the Savior?"<sup>209</sup>

#### • Vow of Virginity according to St. Bonaventure

Chietтини tells us St. Augustine was the first to hold Mary made such a vow, although he says Origen insinuated it, and, later, St. Bede, Hugh of St. Victor, St. Bernard and the Scholastics, including St. Bonaventure.<sup>210</sup> The Seraphic Doctor argues from the dignity of the Divine Maternity. "It was fitting that [Christ] be conceived of a mother incorrupt both in fact and in firm will; but perfect incorruption consists in the vow of virginity." Otherwise, Mary would not have been "the most fitting dwelling."<sup>211</sup> To deny the vow of Mary would make her less than vowed virgins: "God forbid ...that any other virgin excel blessed Mary ...and therefore the Holy Spirit, who inspired others [to take] the vow of virginity, did not keep it hidden from her."<sup>212</sup>

Also, Mary's role in salvation history demanded such a vow. The second reason is that she might be to women an example of complete virginity. For, just as God the Father proposed Christ as an example to men, so he established his mother as an example to women; and, since the vow of virginity is the most to be imitated and praised, without doubt, it had to be found in her.<sup>213</sup>

What of the Law's command to be fruitful? "We should say the most holy Virgin was not under the Law. For how could she be under the Law, who bore the author of the Law."<sup>214</sup> St. Thomas does not say Mary was strictly bound by the Law but seems to have more regard for its observance than St. Bonaventure. "But Christ first promulgated the Gospel counsels. How could his mother

<sup>207</sup> Aquinas, *IV Sent.*, d. 30, q. 2, a. 1, quaestiuncula 3, sol. 2.

<sup>208</sup> Aquinas, *III*, 28, 4 c.

<sup>209</sup> R. Laurentin, *The truth of Christmas beyond the myth*, p. 418; cf. *Structure et théologie de Luc I-II*, 1957, pp.178ff (only in the French edition; cf. also Gavin Reilly, O.F.M.Cap. dissertation on virginity and marriage according to St. Bonaventure and published articles.)

<sup>210</sup> Chietтини, p. 173 & n. 37.

<sup>211</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 30, a. 1, q. 2, c; *IV*, 709b.

<sup>212</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 30, a. 1, q. 2, c; *IV*, 709b.

<sup>213</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 30, a. 1, q. 2, c; *IV*, 709b.

<sup>214</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 30, a. 1, q. 2, ad 1; *IV*, 710b.

make such a vow before his coming? If those who *are led by the Spirit of God* are not under the Law, she, since she was full of the Spirit, did not belong to the Law, but to the Gospel, which the Finger of God, that is, the Holy Spirit, had written on her heart from her very infancy."<sup>215</sup>

• The Vow of Virginity Still Allowed a True Marriage

The *status quaestionis* according to Tavard:

The Virgin Mary was married. But what sort of marriage was it? Since marriage is made, first of all, by the two partners' mutual consent, one may properly ask, in view of the Christian assertion of her virginity, to what she consented when she agreed to marry Joseph of Nazareth. Did she consent to sexual union?<sup>216</sup>

"We cannot deny," St. Bonaventure informs us, "that there was a true marriage between Mary and Joseph, since the Gospel says this and all the saints agree."<sup>217</sup> Other arguments include Mary's being a type of the Church, which is spouse and mother and virgin.

Not only was it fitting that she vow [virginity, L. Gl.] but also that she marry, for three reasons: first because of the symbolism, secondly to avoid infamy, and third, to hide the divine plan.

Because of the symbolism, because the Church is a spiritual spouse and virgin and mother, and therefore, for [Mary] fully to symbolize her, she had to marry.<sup>218</sup>

St. Thomas agrees, following his teacher, St. Albert the Great,<sup>219</sup> with Mary's typification of the Church.<sup>220</sup>

Another reason was to defend her from false accusation:

The second reason is the avoidance of dishonor: because, as Bernard said, everyone would have believed Mary was immoral; and "it was not fitting for this to be believed about the mother of God nor also about Christ, that he was born of adultery; it was more tolerable that it be believed for a while that he

<sup>215</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 30, a. 1, q. 2, ad 2; IV, 710b.

<sup>216</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 6.

<sup>217</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 28, a. 1, q. 6, ad 5; IV, 697.

<sup>218</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 30, a. 1, q. 2, c; IV, 709. Non solum autem conveniens fuit ut voveret, sed etiam ut nuberet, triplici ex causa: primo propter significationem, secundo propter infamiae vitiationem, tertio propter divini consilii occultationem.

Propter significationem, quia Ecclesia est spiritualis sponsa et virgo et mater, et hoc significari debuit; et nulla ad hoc significationem idonea fuit, nisi haec quae simul fuit virgo et mater: et ideo, ut perfecte significaret, debuit etiam desponsari.

<sup>219</sup> Albert the Great, *In Matth.*, I, 18; ed. Jammy, IX, 11.

<sup>220</sup> Aquinas, *In IV Sent.*, d. 30, q. 2, a. 1, sol.2; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 29, a. 1; *In Matth.* I, 18.



was born of marriage."<sup>221</sup> For, if the Virgin and her son were defamed, a pretext of excuse would be left to the Pharisees and a cloak to women of ill repute.<sup>222</sup> Agreeing with Origen, Ambrose, Jerome, and Bernard, St. Bonaventure said it was to deceive the devil.<sup>223</sup>

It was fitting that ...she marry ...to hide the divine plan, lest the divine purpose become known to the adversary. In this way, it was hidden from the adversary because, as Bernard says, "What humans knew could not be hidden from the devil;"<sup>224</sup> therefore he could not know it through people, nor directly, for he was totally repelled from the Virgin.<sup>225</sup>

Also, for reasons of humility: "Why married to this bumpkin Joseph? ...For the sake of poverty. Christ had come, above all, to confound pride and therefore preferred to be called the son of a carpenter than of a king."<sup>226</sup>

Can a valid marriage be reconciled with a vow of virginity? Some authors say matrimony demands consent to carnal relations. Mary could consent to this because, they say, she had not vowed but only *intended* to preserve her virginity.<sup>227</sup> Aquinas seems to be among them. St. Bonaventure disagrees with their position: "This opinion wrongs the glorious Virgin for, although it excuses from sin, it lessens the glory of her virginity, so that then she ought not be proclaimed Virgin above all virgins; both our spirit and our hearing shrink from that."<sup>228</sup> This seems to be the strongest disagreement yet between him and the Angelic Doctor.

Some hold that matrimony requires a consent to sexual relations "in general and implicitly."<sup>229</sup> Mary would have to agree *explicitly* to the marriage bond, which involves four things: cohabitation, mutual attentiveness ("obsequium"), mutual power over the body, and sexual relations. But, to this last, she needed to agree only *implicitly*, according to these authorities. Bonaventure disagrees: "The blessed Virgin was well acquainted with the law of marriage and knew explicitly and thought about the act of spouses." Therefore, she could not be indifferent but had either to consent to or refuse explicitly sexual intercourse. In the latter case, she would not be consenting, even in general.<sup>230</sup>

<sup>221</sup> Bernard, *Super Missus est*, homil. 2, n. 13; PL 183, 67.

<sup>222</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 30, a. 1, q. 2, c; IV, 709b.

<sup>223</sup> Chietini, p. 175.

<sup>224</sup> Bernard, *Super Missus est*, homil. 2, n. 13; PL 183, 67.

<sup>225</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 30, a. 1, q. 2, c; IV, 709b.

<sup>226</sup> Bonaventure, *De. Vig. Nat. Dni.*, sermo 11; IX, 98b-99a.

<sup>227</sup> Chietini p. 177.

<sup>228</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 28, a. 1, q. 6, c; IV, 695b-6a.

<sup>229</sup> Chietini p. 177.

<sup>230</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 28, a. 1, q. 6, c; IV, 696a; Chietini, p. 177.

A third opinion, that of St. Thomas and others, is that marriage demands at least conditional consent to sexual intercourse, with this declaration added, "If God wills," or, "Unless God arranges otherwise." And, they say, the blessed Virgin consented this way. "Both consented to conjugal union, but not to carnal union, unless under the condition *if it should please God*."<sup>231</sup>

Borreson tells us:

Two elements go to make the marriage bond indissoluble: consent and carnal union: *consensus et copula*. At the time when Thomas was teaching there were two leading schools of thought defining the relationship between these two elements. Gratian's theory about carnal union taught that consent, when given, was insufficient to establish a conjugal bond. Union of consent should be completed by carnal union, which was the only element which fully symbolized the union-type. On the other side, Peter Lombard taught that consent established the sacramental bond, which would perfectly symbolize the ideal union by being consummated.<sup>232</sup>

She explains the "union-type" which marriage symbolizes a few pages earlier:

It [marriage] was instituted as a sacrament in the law of the Gospel, but its sacramental character existed already as a prefiguration from the moment of creation. The relationship between Adam and Eve prefigures the relationship between Christ and the Church, which is the union-type of sacramental marriage.<sup>233</sup>

She continues:

...Thomas adopts the theory of Peter Lombard, [on, L. GL.] whose *Sentences* he was commenting; he taught that marriage does not consist essentially in a carnal union.<sup>234</sup>

All this discussion about the relationship between consent and sexual intercourse in forming the marriage bond is influenced by the teaching on the marriage between Mary and Joseph. It is a question of protecting the character of true marriage whilst affirming the virginity of Mary, that is to say, of safeguarding in this ideal marriage the presence of consent (*consensus*) and the absence of copulation (*copula*).

Peter Lombard's theory, for this reason, can be more readily used than that of Gratian. In affirming the true character of the marriage between Mary and Joseph, Thomas refers to Augustine, *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* I, 11, 12, 13. He gives a description of the perfection of marriage which is most interesting, coming as it does in the third part of the *Summa*, long after his *Scripta super libros Sententiarum*:

A marriage is real only in so far as it reaches its perfection. Now, every thing can have a twofold perfection, one of which is primary, the other secondary.

<sup>231</sup> Aquinas, III, 29, 2, c.

<sup>232</sup> K. Borreson, *Subordination and equivalence: The nature and role of woman in Augustine and Thomas Aquinas* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald-Verlag, 1995), p. 278.

<sup>233</sup> Borreson, *Subordination*, p. 271.

<sup>234</sup> Borreson, *Subordination*, p. 278.

The primary perfection of a thing consists in the form which gives it its specific character. Secondary perfection is the act by which a thing reaches in some way or other its end. Now, the form of marriage consists in an indissoluble union of souls, a union by virtue of which the spouses are bound to observe towards each other an unshaken fidelity. As regards the purpose of marriage, its two aims are to procreate and educate children. The first purpose is effected by the conjugal act; the second by the combined efforts of the father and mother to bring up their children.<sup>235</sup>

The marriage of Mary and Joseph possessed these perfections, except for that of procreating the child; all they did was to bring up Jesus; but according to this definition of the union of souls, the absence of sexual union did not affect the matrimonial character of their relationship.<sup>236</sup>

But the Seraphic Doctor opposes this teaching, for such a condition is found in every correct consent. Besides, marriage needs an absolute consent, not a conditional one. "Especially 'if the condition is not present,' as in the case of the Virgin, whom God did not wish 'to be united in the flesh to a husband.'"<sup>237</sup> Rejecting these three positions, St. Bonaventure states his own, that, for matrimony, there is no need for consent to sexual relations, only for agreement to the other's right to it. The spouses, that is, must consent to the mutual power over each other's bodies, not necessarily to the exercise of that power.<sup>238</sup> Therefore the Virgin could contract marriage even after an absolute vow of virginity, not just a conditional one. The vow pertained to sexual relations, the nuptial consent to the right to such relations. Mary could freely marry St. Joseph, because she was certain of his intent not to consummate the marriage.

Therefore, since the blessed Virgin knew by divine inspiration or perhaps by Joseph's telling her himself, that he never would wish to use the power over her body, but to guard her virginity; therefore she could and ought to commit or give herself to him. She also knew that if he chose to demand, she could prevent him by publishing the vow;<sup>239</sup>..... Because of this the glorious Virgin consented to contract matrimony, but was certain that he would never consummate the marriage. She knew this either by revelation of the Holy Spirit or by Joseph's telling or be-

<sup>235</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, III, 29, 2, c.

<sup>236</sup> Borreson, *Subordination*, pp. 279f.

<sup>237</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 28, a. 1, q. 6, c; IV, 696b; Chietтини, p. 177. "...Praesertim si non stet conditio," ut in casu Virginis, quem Deus nolebat 'copulari carnaliter viro.'"

<sup>238</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 28, a. 1, q. 6, c; IV, 696a; Chietтини, p. 178.

<sup>239</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 28, a. 1, q. 6, c; IV, 696a. Quoniam igitur beata Virgo divina inspiratione noverat, vel fortasse ipsius Josephi relatione, quod numquam vellet uti eius corporis potestate, sed eius custodire virginitatem; ideo potuit et debuit ei committere sive dare. Sciebat etiam, quod si vellet exigere, quod posset publicando votum contraire;

cause she was thinking about publishing the vow; because in the Law there was the commandment to keep [vows - L. Gl.] although no one had ever dared vow this.<sup>240</sup>

Tavard says it is quite correct to give consent to a marriage which is not to be consummated, if both spouses agree.<sup>241</sup>

Scotus also taught that Mary had vowed virginity absolutely or "simply," relying on St. Joseph's resolve to respect this.<sup>242</sup> St. Thomas held the vow was only conditional:

The Mother of God is not believed to have vowed virginity absolutely before she was married to Joseph; although she desired it [virginity: "eam"] in this matter she submitted her will to the divine decision. Afterward, however, having taken a spouse, as the practice of that time demanded, she made a vow of virginity together with him.<sup>243</sup>

Together with the conditional vow of virginity, St. Thomas also held a conditional consent in marriage: "...both consented to conjugal union; but not expressly to carnal union, unless on the condition, *if it should please God*."<sup>244</sup> This certainly minimizes the conflict between vow and matrimonial consent. The only question might be whether the matrimonial consent retains enough strength to be valid. St. Thomas seems to defend this well, saying that anything has two perfections, one its form or essence and the second the attaining of its end. The essence of matrimony, he holds, lies in the indivisible joining of the wills, by which each spouse is indivisibly bound to keep faith with the other. The purpose of matrimony is the generation and bringing up of children, the first accomplished by sexual union and the second by other activities of the spouses. The essence was achieved by their mutual consent to conjugal union, even if they only conditionally consented to sexual relations. The end of marriage was achieved through the bringing up of the young Jesus. Even if the marriage remained unconsummated as to sexual relations and the generation of new life—which was not generated by the spouses—the union had both its essence and its achieved goal and so was a true marriage. Aquinas quotes Augustine saying the three goods of marriage were present: the good of offspring,

<sup>240</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 28, a. 1, q. 6, c; IV, 696b; Cf. also *De Ann. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 3; IX, 669b; Chietini, p. 178. ...Unde gloriosa Virgo matrimonium consensit contrahere, sed certa fuit, quod numquam matrimonium consummaret, et hoc scivit Spiritus sancti revelatione, vel Joseph relatione, vel quia consideravit de voti publicatione; quia in Lege erat praecceptum servare, sed nullus fuerit ausus hoc vovere.

<sup>241</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 6f.

<sup>242</sup> Scotus, *Op. Oxon.*, *IV Sent.*, d. 30, q. 2; 72.

<sup>243</sup> Aquinas, III, 28, 4, c; Chietini, p. 179.

<sup>244</sup> Aquinas, III, q.29, 2.

the Lord Jesus; the good of faith, since there was no adultery; the good of the sacrament because there was no divorce.<sup>245</sup>

Some more recent authors confidently assert that between the two great Doctors, there is only a difference of words, since the vow which Thomas calls conditional ought to be called absolute. The condition which places in it, "if it should please God," is always assumed in any vow.<sup>246</sup> This does not appear to be entirely accurate. Even if the aforesaid condition, which is assumed in every pledge, does not make them all conditional, still Aquinas holds that the reservation took on special weight in Mary's circumstance: the Mosaic Law, insisting on both men and women's having children. The intention, "if it should please God," made the Blessed Virgin's vow truly conditional, since, before her marriage, she really did not know if the condition would be fulfilled or not. Chietti-ni says St. Thomas more or less reduced her vow to a desire: "...although she desired this, she committed her will on this point to the divine will."<sup>247</sup> Chietti-ni seems quite correct, as far as the time before her marriage, which is the only thing that could conflict with the validity of the nuptial bond.

Chietti-ni<sup>248</sup> tells us that, by holding a conditional vow, St. Thomas attributes to Mary an inclination to the "opus carnis," to the work of the flesh, which St. Bonaventure deplored:

...Piety of faith and reverence for the Virgin does not allow us to believe that her most blessed and purest and most incorrupt soul was to any extent inclined to the work of the flesh; nor, I believe, did she entertain any doubt about this.... But, if anyone should say otherwise, provided he does not wrong the Virgin, no great opposition ought to be raised. For we must diligently beware that the honor of Our Lady in no way be lessened by anyone. It ought to be kept whole, even at the risk of death.<sup>249</sup>

St. Bonaventure energetically maintained what the Fathers of the Church had taught from the earliest times of the Church, that Mary was a virgin before birth, in birth, and after birth. Not content with that, he held she made an absolute vow of virginity from the very beginning, not merely a conditioned one, as the Angelic Doctor maintained. The Seraphic Doctor's opinion was followed by Scotus and many more. Tavard, writing about St. Bonaventure's Mariology, says, "That Mary remained a virgin is not debated. That she had vowed virgin-

<sup>245</sup> Aquinas, III, 29, 2, c.

<sup>246</sup> E. Dublanchy, "Marie," *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, Paris, 1903, IX, 2387; C. Dillenschneider, *La mariologie de S. Alphonse de Liguori. Sources et synthèse doctrinale*. Freiburg (Switzerland), 1934, 268-9.

<sup>247</sup> Aquinas, III, 28, 4 c. "...licet eam in desiderio habuerit, super hoc tamen voluntatem suam divino commisit arbitrio."

<sup>248</sup> Chietti-ni 180.

<sup>249</sup> Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 28, a. 1, q. 6, ad 5; IV 697ab; Chietti-ni 180.

ity is also generally, though not universally, taken for granted.”<sup>250</sup> This eminent theologian must be thinking of Mariologists of all ages, including our own. The Seraphic Doctor held the vow, very firmly. Tavard says, “...Mary vowed virginity.” He quotes Bonaventure, stating that “...Perfect incorruption of the will lies in the vow of virginity,”<sup>251</sup> and, defending Mary’s vow against those who said she belonged to the era of the law, while vows of virginity pertain to the Gospel, asking, “How was she under the law, who begat the author of the law? Further, if those who are led by the spirit of God (Rom. 8:14) are not under the law, she who was filled with the Holy Spirit did not belong to the law but to the gospel, which God’s finger, the Holy Spirit, had written in her heart from her infancy.”<sup>252</sup>

The distinguished Professor Tavard, citing these words, is clearly aware that St. Bonaventure held firmly to Mary’s vow of virginity. It may be that Tavard himself doubts it. In this, he could quote, among others, St. Thomas. Possibly devout Catholics, of medieval and also modern times, project back on Our Lady whatever they deem meritorious in the religious sisters of their own day. A certain historical skepticism might be laudable. St. Thomas may have had some. St. Bonaventure, apparently, did not.

Here we have a significant difference of opinion: on the nature of the vow before marriage, absolute or conditional, and on the nature of the marriage consent which she gave. St. Thomas held that every marriage involves at least a conditional consent to sexual intercourse, St. Bonaventure holding that it does not but only consent to the other’s right to such union. Their points of agreement vastly outweigh their disagreements but this is one point of real opposition.<sup>253</sup>

### Corollary: Jesus’ Delicate Body

The Seraphic Doctor believed the lack of a male human parent would leave Christ’s body entirely woman-like, delicate, tender, and quick to feel pain:

It was not an infrequent notion in medieval piety to insist that, even though he was factually male, Jesus had a qualitatively feminine body, since Mary’s virgini-

<sup>250</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 37.

<sup>251</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 38; Bonaventure, *In IV Sent.*, d. 30, a. unic., q. 2, conclus.; IV, 709.

<sup>252</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 39, quoting Bonaventure, *In IV Sent.*, d. 30, a. unic., q. 2, ad 1,2; IV, 710.

<sup>253</sup> The Franciscan Master held St. John, the beloved disciple, married at Cana (Jn. 2: 1-12), also remained a virgin, committing himself to the disposition of the Holy Spirit, like Mary. “. . . Virgo, qui erat Virginem servaturus, in modo virginitatis cum Virgine conveniret.” Bonaventure, *Comment. In Joannem*, cap. 2, n. 15; VI, 272. Cf. Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 81.

ty entailed that the sole human origin of Christ's body was feminine. This throws light on the Passion ...<sup>254</sup>

See still better how painful the death of Christ was. The more delicate something is, the more it suffers. But there never was a body so sensitive to the bearing of sufferings as the body of the Savior. For the body of woman is more delicate than that of man; now the flesh of Christ was entirely virginal, because it was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin: therefore the Passion of Christ was the most painful of all passions, since he was the most delicate of all virgins.<sup>255</sup>

## PREPARATION IN SOUL

This is the second section on the preparation of Mary for the Divine Motherhood. First, we shall consider her holiness in general, then what the two saints held about the Immaculate Conception.

The grace of God was received into Mary's natural person. We know little about this. One psychologist has this to say:

We read in St. Luke that, when the shepherds told Mary the news of the angels, she responded by treasuring and pondering on this information. Her response to the annunciation is also a quiet one, accepting unconditionally the events which she clearly did not grasp fully. These observations, coupled with the remaining few in the gospels, suggest a quiet, introvert person given to emphasizing the inner world, as against her cousin Elizabeth, who is given to loud cries and has more extrovert temperament. This awareness of the inner world, of the introvert, also suggests a deeper sensitivity and awareness of feelings and emotions, consistent with the journey "in haste" to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who was bearing a child in her old age. She would have seized the emotional significance of this event for her cousin and wanted to share the joy with her. This inner awareness and concern for others is seen again in the wedding of Cana, where she is sensitive to the discomfort of her hosts when their wine runs out.

Mary's capacity for introverted experience may well have contributed to Christ's ...capacity to feel and respond, with emotional accuracy...[and] delicate sensitivity. ...Certainly in his teaching he repeatedly emphasized the inner world.<sup>256</sup>

Many Scripture scholars deny these details much historical dependability. The author says as much: "Those who see in the infancy and childhood narratives of Matthew and Luke just a mixture of the literary genre of Midrash

<sup>254</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 152.

<sup>255</sup> Bonaventure, *De Perfectione vitae ad sorores*, Chap. 6, no. 5; VIII, p. 121. Attende adhuc melius, quam acerba mors Christi fuerit. Quanto quid tenerius, tanto patitur gravius; nunquam autem fuit corpus ita tenerum ad sustinendum passiones, sicut corpus Salvatoris. Corpus enim mulieris tenerius est quam corpus viri; caro autem Christi tota virginea fuit, quia de Spiritu sancto concepta et de Virgine nata: igitur passio Christi fuit omnium passionum acerbior, quia omnium virginum tenerior. Transl. Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 152

<sup>256</sup> J. Dominian, "The relationship between Christ and Mary," in *God and Mary*, pp. 61, 62.

and Haggadah, will be skeptical about any undue emphasis on the historical accuracy of the details."<sup>257</sup> And, of course, the biblical accounts refer to Mary *after*, not before God's grace affected her. Undeterred, the psychologist speaks of Mary's trust in Jesus as necessary for his self-affirmation: "...At the wedding of Cana ...Mary places implicit trust in his efficacious intervention despite his apparent rebuff. Mary's trust also contrasts with the lack of it in his relatives, who thought he was out of his mind."<sup>258</sup>

Trust is related to—or even identified with—faith. This is the foundational virtue for Mary, as for every Christian. "St. Luke's infancy narrative praises Mary's great faith through the lips of Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist: 'And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord (Luke 1: 45).'"<sup>259</sup> St. John's Gospel also tells of her faith, "The structure of this Gospel, in which Mary's request came before Christ had ever worked a miracle, indicates that her faith was unparalleled among his associates." Mary even spread this saving faith to others: "As a result of her intercession the others 'believed in him.'"<sup>260</sup>

Fr. Carroll praises Mary's faith:

St. Augustine saw Mary as the daughter of Abraham in her faith. Her faith made Mary great. No one was ever a more steadfast daughter in the faith of Abraham, "who believed and it was accounted to him as righteousness." The words of the Magnificat show Mary felt herself bound up with Abraham. She too believed in God's promise, she too experienced his mercy, "even as he promised our fathers, promised Abraham and his descendants for ever." Jews and Christians and Muslims too honor Abraham as our father in faith. On gospel evidence Christians can call Mary "our mother in faith, mother of believers."<sup>261</sup>

### St. Thomas on Our Lady's Preparation in Holiness

The Common Doctor says Mary committed no sin, mortal or venial and was full of grace. Any actual sin would have made her unsuitable to be the Mother of God. The words of the canticle were fulfilled in her: "You are wholly beautiful, my love, and there is no stain in you."<sup>262</sup> Thomas teaches that fullness of grace comes from closeness to Christ. Since Mary was closest to him in his humanity, it was right that she receive from him a greater fullness of grace

<sup>257</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>259</sup> Jelly, "The Mother of Jesus," p. 92.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>261</sup> E. Carroll, *Understanding the mother of Jesus*, pp. 18f.

<sup>262</sup> Song, 4:7; Aquinas, III, 27, a. 4.



than others.<sup>263</sup> The words of the angel, "Full of grace," indicate she received in fullness what others receive in part.<sup>264</sup> Not, he says, the most or the most excellent grace possible but a fullness relative to the state to which God called her, sufficient grace to be the Mother of his Son.<sup>265</sup>

Thomas says Mary was sanctified in her mother's womb.<sup>266</sup> Then she was more fully sanctified when she conceived Christ.<sup>267</sup> The first sanctification was a gift of operative grace. The second, at the Annunciation, required her consent and was due to cooperative grace.<sup>268</sup>

St. Thomas frankly admitted:

...that Mary "was of the same nature as other women"<sup>269</sup> Gifted as she was, she was not another kind of being; like her fellow men of the male and female sex, she is *human* and Thomas does not exempt her from temptation and trials, as he did not exempt Christ.<sup>270</sup> We might say, paraphrasing St. Paul, she was like to her sisters in all things except sin.<sup>271</sup>

Also, he did not see her sanctity as a flight from the world: "Important here to us is St. Thomas' locating the sanctification of Mary within the world of men and sin, within everyday life, in terms of the vocation of a woman, a wife, a mother."<sup>272</sup>

Mary's purification was not necessary, according to St. Thomas, to protect Jesus from any contagion of original sin. This was passed on only through the paternal seed and, since Mary conceived virginally, there was no possibility of this:

Thomas starts out with the idea that Mary's function is that of a normal mother. She furnishes, therefore, the material necessary for growth. Thus Christ, by

<sup>263</sup> Aquinas, III, 27, 5, c.

<sup>264</sup> Aquinas, *Sum.theol.*, III, q. 27, a. 5, sed contra.

<sup>265</sup> Aquinas, III, 7, 10, ad 1.

<sup>266</sup> Aquinas III, 27, 1, c.

<sup>267</sup> Aquinas, III, 27, 5, ad 2. He also says she was sanctified further in glory.

<sup>268</sup> "Grace," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, VI, p. 670a.

<sup>269</sup> Aquinas, III, 31, a. 5, ad 1.

<sup>270</sup> Aquinas, "Supplementum," q. 96, a. 5, ad 2.

<sup>271</sup> W. Cole, "Thomas on Mary and woman: a study in contrasts," *De cultu mariano: saeculis XII-XV Acta Congressus Mariologicae-Mariani Internationalis Romae 1975 celebrati. Vol. IV: De cultu mariano apud scriptores ecclesiasticos saec. XII-XIII*. Rome: Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis, 1980, pp.570f.. For a different view of Mary and feminism, see L. Iammarrone, "La sublimazione della dignità della donna nella Divina Maternità di Maria," *Miles Immaculatae* 20 (1984) pp. 49-70.

<sup>272</sup> F. Smith, " Mary in the persepctive of St. Thomas' teaching on the gifts of the Holy Spirit," *De cultu mariano: saeculis XII-XV. Acta Congressus Mariologicae-Mariani Internationalis Romae 1975 celebrati. Vol. IV: De cultu mariano apud scriptores ecclesiasticos saec. XII-XIII*. Rome: Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis, 1980, p. 513.

reason of his miraculous conception is joined to Adam through maternal matter (*corpulenta substantia*) and not by paternal seed (*ratio seminalis*). Only this last transmits original sin: Christ, therefore, is exempt from it.<sup>273</sup>

Thomas makes express reference to Augustine (*Gen. Ad litt.* X, 20) in order to expound this doctrine of the corporal, though not seminal, link between Adam and Christ through the medium of Mary. But his argumentation is carried out on the lines of Aristotle's physiology.<sup>274</sup>

Because the mother cannot transmit original sin, Mary's condition [in grace or sin, L. Gl.] is, in principle, a matter of indifference where the divinity of Christ is concerned. If, in spite of everything, Mary is personally purified from original sin, it is because of her dignity as mother of God.<sup>275</sup>

"This anterior purification of the Blessed Virgin was not required in order to prevent original sin from falling upon Christ, but because it was necessary for the mother of God to shine with extreme purity, for only that which is pure can be a worthy receptacle of God, according to the text (*Ps. XCIII, 5*): 'Holiness, O Lord, becomes thy house.'<sup>276</sup>

### St. Bonaventure on Mary's Immunity from Sin

Although, as we shall see, he did not hold the Immaculate Conception, the Seraphic Doctor held that Mary was sanctified in her mother's womb, even more quickly than others sanctified before birth: "It is true that the sanctification of the Blessed Virgin excelled the sanctification of other saints as to magnitude and promptness."<sup>277</sup> Tavad says he saw no difficulty in admitting Mary was freed from all sin, original and actual, in this prenatal sanctification, because of her special relation to the Trinity and especially to the Word.<sup>278</sup>

Graef tells us that, according to the Seraphic Doctor, Mary's purification took place in two stages. In the first, before her birth, immediately after the infusion of her soul, she was conformed *to other saints* by the ability to *avoid* all sin, mortal and venial. In the second, from the moment of the Incarnation, "This was increased to the *impossibility* of falling into any sin."<sup>279</sup> The Saint says in the second stages, she was conformed *to her Son*, unable to commit it.<sup>280</sup> Our Lady was not only cleansed from sin but free from any stain of actual sin,

<sup>273</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, III, 55, 6, ad. 3.

<sup>274</sup> Aquinas, *C. Gentes*, IV, 79; *Comp. Theol.*, 151.

<sup>275</sup> Aquinas, *Supplement*, 75 1, c.

<sup>276</sup> Borreson, *Subordination*, pp. 221f.; Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I-II, 81, 5, add 3.

<sup>277</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, ad 5; III, 69a. Cf. *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 6; IX 702b.

<sup>278</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 25.

<sup>279</sup> Graef, I, p. 283.

<sup>280</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, III, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 3 (III, p. 77).

even the slightest, and infallibly so, from the time of the Annunciation and her conception of Our Lord.

### Bonaventure on Mary's *de facto* Freedom from Actual Sin

The Blessed Virgin had the privilege of freedom from actual sin, that is, she was guilty of no sin by her own action or choice. Her Son, Our Lord, had this privilege and it has been held from the earliest times of the Church that she too was granted it. True, some Fathers seem to have held the opposite<sup>281</sup> But the teaching of St. Anselm, St. Bernard and others totally outweighs theirs. St. Augustine's principle dominates the Catholic Tradition: "[Concerning] the holy Virgin Mary ...on account of the honor of the Lord, I want no question when sins are discussed."<sup>282</sup>

St. Bonaventure thought the same. Trying to follow closely in the footsteps of Sts. Augustine, Anselm, and Bernard, he vigorously defended this privilege. Among his praises of Our Lady we find:

And it was fitting that the advocate of the human race have no sin which might gnaw at her conscience... It was also fitting that the Blessed Virgin, through whom shame was removed from us, conquer the devil, so that she not succumb to him in even a small way...It was also appropriate that she who so pleased the Most High that she became his spouse and the mother of the only-begotten Son of God, be as immaculate in mind as she was undefiled in the flesh.<sup>283</sup>  
The innocent Lamb ought to have for wife only one like him in every way, therefore lamb-like and innocent; and such was the Blessed Virgin.<sup>284</sup>

He also says, there is no doubt that the Mother of God ought to be such that she could not be accused of sin, since that would be a rebuke to Christ.<sup>285</sup>

<sup>281</sup> Cf. C. Chevalier, *La Mariologie de saint Jean Damascène*, Rome, 1936, jp. 130.; A. Eberle, *Die Mariologie des hl. Cyrillus von Alexandrien* (Freiburg i. Br., 1921), pp. 120-2; M.J. Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, Freiburg i. Br., 1882, 565.

<sup>282</sup> Augustine, *De natura et gratia*, c. 36, n. 42; PL 44, 267; Chietini, 148.

<sup>283</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 1, c ( III, p. 73). Et hoc congruebat *advocatam* generis humani, ut nullum haberet peccatum, quod eius conscientiam remorderet.... Congruum etiam erat, ut beata Virgo Maria, per quam *aufertur nobis opprobrium*, vinceret diabolum, ut nec ei succumberet ad modicum.... Congruum etiam fuit, ut illa, quae *placuit Altissimo* adeo, ut fieret eius sponsa et mater Filii Dei unigeniti, sic esset immaculata mente, sicut intemerata carne.

<sup>284</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, sermo 5; IX, 699ab. Cf. *De Purif. B.M.V.*, sermo 1; IX, 634a. Agnus innocens non debet habere *uxorem* nisi similem sibi per omnia, ergo agninam et innocentem; et talis fuit beata Virgo; ...

<sup>285</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 3, ad 3; (III, p. 78.) "...Nulli tamen dubium est de Matre Dei, quin talis debuerit esse, quae non potuerit redargui de peccato, cum fuisset ad improprium Christi."

Our Lady had "puritas in summo [purity in the highest degree]."<sup>286</sup> To her can be most fittingly applied the words of the Cantic: "You are all-beautiful, my beloved, and there is no blemish in you."<sup>287</sup> St. Bonaventure held an illumination of every good human will, parallel to the illumination of the intellect needed to grasp unchanging truth.<sup>288</sup>

Tavard finds, "Problems arise, however, when one tries to figure out whether all concupiscence was also extinguished in Mary by her pre-natal sanctification."<sup>289</sup> And it is difficult to understand all the nuances in the various opinions offered, as Bonaventure himself says, of one of these opinions, "...Illud difficile est intelligere." His position is moderate, holding that, in the first, prenatal sanctification, her concupiscence was lulled to sleep (*consopitus*) and in the second, at the Annunciation, it was entirely uprooted and removed. Other opinions he cites are, one, that the concupiscence was never entirely removed, even at the second sanctification and, the second, that it was truly removed even at the first and removed in a different way in the second (this is what Bonaventure found difficult to understand).<sup>290</sup>

As second sanctification, the Annunciation filled Mary with grace in a new way: beyond sanctifying grace, ...she was given a grace of confirmation in the good  
....<sup>291</sup>

"She was so united to her Son that in no way would he permit her to be separated from himself."<sup>292</sup>

The Franciscan Doctor deduced this privilege not only from her dignity as Mother of God but also from her role in human salvation. This privilege consisted in this, that before the Incarnation, the tinder ["fomes"] of concupiscence was not extinguished<sup>293</sup> and therefore able to be excited by extrinsic agents,<sup>294</sup> still it was so kept down by grace that it could produce no effect.

To the objection that the tinder impels necessarily to venial sin and causes difficulty in doing good, the answer is that it is true, when the tinder is in its vigor,

<sup>286</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, *sermo 6* (IX, p. 702). *Ibid.*, *sermo 5* (IX, p. 699); *De Purif. B.M.V.*, *sermo 1* (IX, p. 638).

<sup>287</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, *sermo 5*; IX, 699b; Song, 4:7 [NAB]; Chietini 149.

<sup>288</sup> Thonnard, *A short history of philosophy*, 429.

<sup>289</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 25.

<sup>290</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 2, conclus.; III, 75.

<sup>291</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 3, conclus. (III, p. 77). Respondeo: Dicendum quod in secunda sanctificatione non tantum fuit data Virgini gratia sanctificans, sed etiam gratia in bono confirmans; et hoc, quia Filio suo adeo fuit coniuncta, ut nullo modo permitteret, eam a seipso sequestrari.

<sup>292</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 26.

<sup>293</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 2, c; III, 75b.

<sup>294</sup> Bonaventure, *ibid.*; III, 74b-75a.

when it is not repressed by grace moving to the contrary; and therefore it had no place in the Virgin, where there was perfect grace, calming her soul and potencies.<sup>295</sup>

### The Impeccability of the Blessed Virgin according to St. Bonaventure

Here, too, we may have a difference between the two saints: St. Thomas, apparently, said only that Mary *did* not sin, not that she *could* not.<sup>296</sup>

The Scholastics made a great distinction between the first and the second sanctifications of the Virgin Mary and extolled the second much more. As Our Lady approached nearer the fountain of all grace, it was fitting that she receive a greater share of it and be even further from any domination by sin. The Franciscan Doctor held she was impeccable, at least from the time of conceiving Christ. When she became his mother, "she was sanctified conformably to her Son ...as to the impossibility of falling into any sin."<sup>297</sup> The *Summa* of Alexander of Hales says: To be unable to sin belongs, not only to the state of glory but also to the state of perfect grace ...Therefore, when the Blessed Virgin, after the second sanctification, was in the state of perfect grace, for which reason the Angel said, 'Hail, full of grace,' it is evident that she did not have the potency to sin."<sup>298</sup>

This was not, according to Bonaventure, a physical or metaphysical impossibility and still less was it a deprivation of freedom.<sup>299</sup>

The Blessed Virgin, after conceiving the Son of God, could not sin, not because of any lack of power but because of the confirmation of power and the removal of defect.<sup>300</sup>

That [the Blessed Virgin] could not sin is certainly to be understood to indicate *the state of free will*, as the holy Fathers say "be unable to sin," viz., to mean the removal of every disposition or inclination to evil and the fullness of grace for good.<sup>301</sup>

<sup>295</sup> Bonaventure, *ibid.*; III, 76a; cf. c.; III, 75b. Ad illud quod obiicitur, quod fomes impellit ad necessitatem ad peccandum venialiter, et ad difficultatem ad bonum; diciendum, quod illud verum est, ubi est fomes in vigore suo, ubi non reprimatur a gratia movente in contrarium; et ideo non habet locum in Virgine, ubi fuit gratia perfecta, tranquillans eius animam et potentias.

<sup>296</sup> Aquinas, III, 27, 4.

<sup>297</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 3, c.; III, 77b.

<sup>298</sup> Alexander of Hales, *Summa. Theol.*, p. 3, q. 8, m. 3, a. 2; III, 33a; cf. Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.M.V.*, *sermo 1*; IX, 634ab; *sermo 5*; IX, 654a.

<sup>299</sup> Chietтини, p. 150.

<sup>300</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 3, c.; III, 77b-8a.

<sup>301</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, *sermo 6*; IX, 702a.

In Our Lady, there is a question only of a moral impossibility of sinning, arising from her confirmation in grace and the removal of every inclination to sin and the fullness of grace, inclining her to the good.<sup>302</sup> The tinder of concupiscence, only suppressed (according to St. Thomas, "bound"<sup>303</sup>) in the first sanctification, was at the second sanctifying, totally removed. "In the second sanctification ... [the Holy Spirit] left her flesh immaculate, rooting out of it the tinder and all concupiscence."<sup>304</sup> Chietтини notes here that the most common modern opinion, based on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, is that the tinder was entirely removed from Our Lady at the first sanctification.<sup>305</sup>

Chietтини places first among the Seraphic Doctor's arguments for Mary's impeccability, her close connection with Christ, in the flesh:

As it was impossible, because of the honor of her Son, that she have another child, so it was impossible that she ever in the future have sin. As it was impossible that the virginity of [her] flesh, in which the Son of God dwelt, be violated, so it was impossible that the holiness of her mind be stained by any sin.<sup>306</sup> It would be a disgrace [vituperium] to Christ if he had a sinner for a mother: if therefore there can be no insult to Christ, it is seen that after, his conception, there can be no fault in the Blessed Virgin.<sup>307</sup>

Moreover, if it was impossible that the Mother of God be damned, it must also have been impossible that she fall into serious sin. The possibility of the one entails the possibility of the other, since one who can sin can also persevere in sin and so be lost.<sup>308</sup> And finally, it is not appropriate that the angels, confirmed in grace by the privilege of impeccability, surpass the Mother of God.<sup>309</sup>

The Fullness of Grace in Our Lady, according to the Seraphic Doctor

Mary's plenitude of grace is shown in the angelic salutation: "Full of grace." Along with the whole of Tradition, the Seraphic Doctor holds that it shows her fullness, and her possession of outstanding gifts of grace, held cumu-

<sup>302</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, sermo 6; IX, 702a; *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 3, c.; III 77a.

<sup>303</sup> Aquinas, III, 27, 3.

<sup>304</sup> Bonaventure *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 2, c.; III, 75b.

<sup>305</sup> Chietтини, p. 151, n. 116.

<sup>306</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 3, c.; III, 76ab; *ibid.*, fund. 1; III, 76a; cf. St. Ambrose, *De institutione virginis*, c. 6, n. 44; PL, 16, 331.

<sup>307</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 3, fund. 1; III, 76ab; *ibid.*, c.; III, 77b.

<sup>308</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 3, fund. 3; III, 76b.

<sup>309</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.* d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 3, fund. 4; III, 76b.

lately.<sup>310</sup> "Mary is so graced as to surpass all saints<sup>311</sup> and even the angels."<sup>312</sup> Basing himself on the Annunciation, the center of his Mariology, as well as on Sts. Jerome and Bernard, Bonaventure says Mary received grace in its fullness, while others receive in part.<sup>313</sup> Tavard quotes the Franciscan Doctor, "Neither the blessed Virgin nor Christ [in his humanity] surpasses the angels by reason of their nature, but [they do so] by reason of their manifold grace." He then comments, "This is the high point of Bonaventure's perspective on Mary."<sup>314</sup>

Of grace, others have a plenitude of "sufficiency," Mary has a fullness of "prerogative," and only Christ is above her, with a fullness of "superabundance."<sup>315</sup>

The Blessed Virgin differed from Christ in that he received, at the first moment of his conception, so much grace that he never could have more. She however, received a wealth of grace which was increased, both *ex opere operantis*, from her constant exercise of virtues, and *ex opere operato*, especially from the conception of her Divine Son. "It was extremely appropriate that grace be increased with her and in her at that time when she bore it [grace, i.e. Christ

<sup>310</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 5; IX, 677b, ff; *ibid.*, *sermo* 6; IX, 682 ff.; *Comm. Evgl. Lc.*, c. 1, n. 46 ff; VII, 22ab.

<sup>311</sup> Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. 44; III, 793b-4a.

<sup>312</sup> Bonaventure, *II Sent.*, d. 16, a. 2, q. 1, ad 3 & 4; II, 402a; *ibid.*, d. 1, p. 2, a. 2, q.2, ad 3; II, 46b; *III Sent.*, d. 2; III, 58a; Chietini, 153.

<sup>313</sup> Bonaventure, "Sermo in Annuntiatione," 5; IX, p. 679.

<sup>314</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 41; Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d. 1, p. 2, a. 2, q. 2, ad 3; II, 47. The saint's attitude toward angels seems obscure. Tavard, summarizing Bonaventure, says no cult of angels is allowed in the New Testament, though *dulia* was appropriate in the Old, since human nature has been raised in Christ above the angelic. *Forthbringer*, pp. 105f. St. Bonaventure says, ". . . Quamvis Angeli in veteri Testamento paterentur, se *dulia* adorari ab hominibus; in novo tamen, post glorificationem humanae naturae in Christo non patiuntur, sibi illam subiici, quam vident consedere ad dexteram Patris; . . ." [ ". . . Although the angels in the Old Testament had allowed themselves to be honored by humans with "*dulia*," nevertheless, in the New, after the glorification of human nature in Christ, they did not allow that to be subjected to them, which they saw seated at the right hand of the Father.] He cites St. Gregory. *In III Sent.*, d. 9, a. 1, q. 5, ad 2; III, 210. If angels are not to be given *dulia*, why is surpassing them the "high point?" Maybe this is an exercise of angelic humility and they are still so extremely noble that surpassing them is the high point of Mariology. It is difficult to agree with St. Bonaventure here. A. Bialas says, ". . . Cult of . . . angels . . . is an act of secondary veneration (*dulia*)."  
*New Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Angels. 3. Devotion to." A. D. Lee says, ". . . The same type of worship due the person can be rendered to the image as representing the person: . . . *dulia* to the angels and saints." *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Images, veneration of." These articles seem to express the *sensus Ecclesiae* of today, as does the widely accepted morals text, Noldin-Schmitt, ". . . Cultu *duliae* . . . coluntur angeli et sancti. [The veneration of *dulia* is given to angels and saints]." *Summa Theologiae Moralis*, v. 2, "De praeceptis," # 136 c."

<sup>315</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 13, a. 1, q. 3, c.; III, 282ab); cf. *I Sent.*, d. 16, a. 1, q. 2, c.; I, 281b; *ibid.*, q. 3, c.; I, 284b.

who is grace] in her womb."<sup>316</sup> Mary's grace, already abundant, increased vastly at her Son's conception: "A small fount grew into a great river and a light was turned into the sun."<sup>317</sup> "She was wholly filled with grace [at the conception of the Word] as the earth is watered by rivers from above."<sup>318</sup>

Some have held that Mary never had an increase in grace after her first sanctification. Others, like Peter the Venerable, denying that, say there was no increase after the second sanctification. Some, like Bauerle, say St. Bonaventure held that. Chietтини disagrees.<sup>319</sup> The saint does say Mary had a wealth of grace which could not have been increased but he does not set any time for this.<sup>320</sup>

Even if we grant St. Bonaventure meant that, at her second sanctification, Our Lady's capacity for grace was completely filled up ["completam fuisse atque impletam"], that only means there could be no increase until God increased that capacity. This could, at least, have been the opinion of the Seraphic Doctor.

Let us grant that the angelic nature may have a greater capacity for grace than human nature according to its natural potency ...nevertheless, through some gift divinely given it, the capacity of the soul can be elevated as far as that of an angel, and in some way, beyond it. For the gift of "gratia gratis data" disposes for "gratia gratum faciens." And it is possible that this was so in Christ and the Blessed Virgin.<sup>321</sup>

Bauerle cannot quote a single author in his favor, holding the Seraphic Doctor held for no increase in Mary's grace after the second sanctification. And the older Bonaventurian authorities do not hold it, such as Trigosus, De Barberiis, Bontempus.<sup>322</sup> This does not mean the saint attributed a lesser sanctity to Mary. "The prophet assigns the reason of this full and perfect sanctity in the psalm, when he says, Holiness befits your house, O Lord, for length of days."<sup>323</sup> Since it is not clear exactly what either of the great Doctors held on the possibility of an increase in Mary's grace, it cannot be held either as an agreement or a disagreement. Our ignorance of one is similar to our ignorance of the other.

<sup>316</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 3, fund. 4; III, 70a; Chietтини, 154.

<sup>317</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 4; IX, 695-6a; Esth. 11, 10.

<sup>318</sup> Bonaventure, *De Annunc. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 3; IX, 669b.

<sup>319</sup> Chietтини, p. 155.

<sup>320</sup> Chietтини, p. 156.

<sup>321</sup> Bonaventure, *II Sent.*, d. 16, a. 2, q. 1; II, 402b.

<sup>322</sup> Chietтини, 156.

<sup>323</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 5; IX, 678a; Ps. 93: 5 [NAB]; cf. *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 3, fund. 4; III, 70ab; *De donis Spiritus sancti*, coll. 6, n. 2; V, 483b; *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 6; IX, 702b.



There is also another reason for her fullness of grace: her role in the salvation of the human race. She did not have these gifts only for herself but (my translations) "that ...she might also overflow upon others."<sup>324</sup> "The sweetness of grace was stored in her, so that all might go to her to obtain grace."<sup>325</sup> Also, it is our comfort that we have in her a receptacle of sanctity and a refuge.<sup>326</sup> He says the same thing more elegantly when he says, "She has irrigated the garden of the whole Church and, because she has communicated most liberal streams, she has received abundant grace."<sup>327</sup>

Tavard, relying only on the Franciscan Master's earliest writings, the *dubia circa litteram*, says: "What Bonaventure is suggesting here is simply that the Annunciation, and the ensuing state of the Virgin as she bore the Son of God, were of the rank and quality of the highest mystical states. She was, then, as profoundly united to God as is possible to anyone in this life."<sup>328</sup>

Restricting himself again to the same sources, Tavard adds:

Mary also, though "merely a creature, has been raised above the angels." This notion may be disconcerting to the modern mind, for which belief in angels has the color of an oddity. Yet Bonaventure insists on it...If one conceives of heaven as having higher and lower levels, or ...as made of several successive heavens (nine, in Bonaventure's reckoning), then the highest is the "heaven of the Trinity," which is also that of the human nature of Christ, sitting at the right hand of the Father. "After him we believe the blessed Virgin to be above the others," whether angels or humans. "Afterwards the others rank according to their merits."<sup>329</sup>

### The Virtues of the Virgin Mary according to Bonaventure

Her abundant share in the theological and moral virtues is discussed in Chietini,<sup>330</sup> with special stress on faith, charity, and humility. In particular, Mary had the virtues of the contemplative and active life, of both Martha and Mary: "...In these two sisters the perfection of the active and the contemplative lives was described, which was most perfectly realized in the Virgin. For what was given to these two sisters separately was given to Mary totally and integrally."<sup>331</sup>

<sup>324</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 3; IX, 669b.

<sup>325</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 5; IX, 717b.

<sup>326</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 2; IX, 641b.

<sup>327</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 1; IX, 658a.

<sup>328</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 10.

<sup>329</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 11.

<sup>330</sup> Chietini, 158-167.

<sup>331</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 75f; Bonaventure, *Comment. In Ev. S. Lucae*, cap. 10, n. 76; VII, 276. The Seraphic Doctor notes this gospel was read on the feast of the Assumption (till 1951: Tavard). *Loc. cit.* He adds this was done by divine inspiration. *Op. cit.*, cap. 10, n. 80; VII, 277.

## Summary on the Holiness and Virtues of the Virgin Mary according to the Two Saints

The Angel of the Schools held Mary committed no actual sin, mortal or venial, and that to have done so would have made her unsuitable to be Mother of God. She was full of grace. She was closest to Christ in his humanity and, consequently, had a greater fullness of grace than others, not the greatest grace possible, but a fullness sufficient for her vocation to the Divine Maternity. The Common Doctor held three sanctifications of Our Lady: the first before birth, the second at the Annunciation, and the third when she entered heaven.

Similarly, the Seraphic Doctor also held two stages in her earthly holiness: the first beginning immediately after the infusion of her soul, when she had the ability to avoid all sin, the second from the moment of the Incarnation, when she had the inability to commit it. This was a moral impossibility and did not limit her freedom. Although the Franciscan Master did not hold the Immaculate Conception, he did teach she was sanctified immediately after her life began. In comparison with other saints' grace in their mothers' wombs, Mary's sanctification was greater and sooner.

Some of the Fathers seem to have held that Our Lady did commit some actual sins. Nearly the whole of Catholic Tradition, to which St. Bonaventure adhered, contradicts this. He held that, even before the Incarnation, the tinder of concupiscence was bound in Mary and could have no effect upon her. After the Annunciation, she enjoyed impeccability.

Mary had a fullness of grace, greater than all saints and angels. She also shared abundantly in all the virtues. There is a dispute about how great a fullness of grace she enjoyed at each stage of her sanctification and whether that grace could be increased. The two Doctors seem fully agreed.

## The Immaculate Conception

In 1854, the Church declared Mary's preparation in holiness began with the first moment of her conception, when, without any stain of original sin, she was filled with the redemptive grace of Christ. The doctrine was not nearly so clear in the thirteenth century, when our authors considered it. They found it difficult.

Another change in modern times is our awareness of the great part a mother plays in the emotional development, the personality development of her

Tavard remarks, "Bonaventure's conclusion may seem to go somewhat beyond his premises." *Forthbringer*, p. 76.

child. Jack Dominican speaks of Christ's total affirmative acceptance of himself and his acceptance of others who needed his attention. He goes on:

If my contention is correct, then the part that Mary played in such affirmative growth is fundamental and all pervasive; a dogma such as the Immaculate Conception is a necessary postulate, not in giving her full comprehension of Christ's identity, but in ensuring that her presence did nothing which inhibited Christ's growth.<sup>332</sup>

He concludes: "Both at the beginning and at the end of life there is a unity of mutual acceptance and purpose, which suggest that she played a crucial role in the period between."<sup>333</sup>

### The Immaculate Conception according to St. Thomas

The Angel of the Schools approximates the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, saying Our Lady was purified of original sin very shortly after her conception. This would have been a very unusual grace. He had difficulties with the concept of the Immaculate Conception, because of the universal redemption by Christ<sup>334</sup> and even because of his view of the nature of the grace of Christ, which he viewed as essentially remedial, appropriate only to those in sin:

...Thomas argued that the grace of Christ (i.e. the grace which flows to humanity from Christ) is somewhat different from the grace that was bestowed on Adam. Whereas the grace of Adam, subsequently lost in the fall, was predominantly to strengthen his nature, the grace of Christ, although not *substantially* different, is given firstly to heal our fallen nature. Grace is understood by Thomas as the remedy for sin, and as the strengthener of our nature, but its *first* action on corrupt nature is to make it righteous in God's sight. Whilst the grace of Adam was therefore bestowed for one reason, the grace of Christ is bestowed for two. And it is the grace of Christ which is now offered to all humanity, not the "grace of Adam." Firstly, therefore, according to Thomas, all who receive grace, receive it because they need to be healed. We must therefore understand Thomas to be saying that before the reception of the grace of Christ, the receiver must be *actually* ill. Thomas might well have had in mind the Gospel: "Those who are well have no need of a doctor, but those who are sick; I came not to call the righteous but sinners." (Mark 2, 17).

...It could be said that Mary enjoyed the grace of Christ the Doctor in a *preventative* way.... But I am sure that Thomas would have seen this argument as not far removed from sleight of hand. For Thomas seems to me to say insistently that the medicine of Christ is not to be understood in the manner of a vaccination, but precisely to be understood as medicine for the healing of an actual sickness. Men and women must be actually sick, not potentially sick. The only exception

<sup>332</sup> Dominican, p. 63.

<sup>333</sup> Dominican, p. 68.

<sup>334</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 2; *III*, 27, 2 c & ad 2; *Compendium*, 224.

according to Thomas is Christ who never suffered the sickness...St. Thomas' rejection of the belief in the Immaculate Conception of Mary was based on very central ideas in his theological system, not peripheral ones,...<sup>335</sup>

The Immaculate Conception seemed to remove Mary from those redeemed by Christ, especially in the form in which it was proposed by some at his time, as an absolute privilege rather than as an anticipated redemption. There were other problems arising from the three-stage theory of human animation then current. It seemed that neither sin nor grace could be present in a human fetus before the third, rational, soul came in, and that purification after animation would imply some moment in which she was in sin.

Some, like Garrigou-Lagrange,<sup>336</sup> defend St. Thomas as a believer in the Immaculate Conception, but the texts used in support of this are, by others, considered inauthentic and unable to stand against other, certainly genuine texts which reject the privilege:

It is believed that she was sanctified quickly after the conception and infusion of the soul.<sup>337</sup>

"One must affirm that anyone needed the redemption of Christ *personally* and not only by reason of nature<sup>338</sup>....it is not known at what time she was sanctified."<sup>339</sup>

In regard to a text seeming to support the privilege, X. LeBachelet says, "These words are not decisive. One would have to prove that the Angelic Doctor was thinking of the instant of her conception, not of her first sanctification or, more likely, of her second, perfect sanctification on the day of the Annunciation."<sup>340</sup>

<sup>335</sup> M. Hodges, "Why did St. Thomas reject the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary?" (Wallington, Surrey: The Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Oct. 17, 1990.), pp. 8, 9. Hodges, a Dominican, goes on to say, since these anti-Immaculate Conception points are central, not peripheral, to Thomas, that "My talk could be taken to suggest that to accept the Immaculate Conception, which all Catholics must now embrace, is to question radically the points in St. Thomas' thought outlined above." He even says, "... The Church should not be afraid of jettisoning some or even eventually all of Thomas' thought; ... ." To this simple Capuchin, this seems alarming and I take comfort in the large number of commentators who take no such revolutionary stand. We could avoid any danger "of jettisoning some or even ... all of Thomas' thought," by saying that grace is essentially elevating, Godlike-making, and having a medicinal, reparative effect only on those previously severely damaged.

<sup>336</sup> *Mother of the Savior*.

<sup>337</sup> *Quodl.*, VI, q. 5, a. 1. Creditur enim quod cito post conceptionem et animae infusionem fuerit sanctificata

<sup>338</sup> *IV Sent.*, d. 43, q.1, a. 4, sol. 1, ad 3. Oportet autem ponere quod quilibet personaliter redemptione Christi indigeat et non solum ratione naturae

<sup>339</sup> III, 27, 2, ad 3; Cf. *IV Sent.*, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 4. quo tempore sanctificata fuerit, ignoratur

<sup>340</sup> "Immaculée Conception;" *Dict. Theol. Cath.*, 7, 1054.

Although we must conclude that St. Thomas is to be listed among the opponents of Mary's privilege, there is a reputable opinion that Aquinas, not as a scientific theologian in the maturity of the *Summa Theologiae*, but as a preacher in the maturity of his devotion and love of Mary, may have accepted the Immaculate Conception.

Most theologians today admit that in the *Summa*, he denies this privilege. It is fairly certain that in his *Expositio super salutatione angelica*, which was written later, he affirms it. We must keep in mind, however, that this document is the report of a sermon and thus without the same theological weight as his other writings. At the same time, it does suggest that, if his mind was more or less set in one direction, his heart was going in another.<sup>341</sup>

### The Immaculate Conception according to St. Bonaventure

St. Bonaventure did not hold the Immaculate Conception, although, as Graef says, he minimizes the hold sin had on her as much as possible.<sup>342</sup> He was guided in this rejection by his teachers: "Not one of those we have heard with our own ears has been found to say that the Virgin Mary was exempt from original sin." Tavard goes on to say these include the early Franciscan theologians Alexander of Hales, Jean de la Rochelle, and Eudes Rigault.<sup>343</sup> St. Bernard influenced him strongly. The Seraphic Doctor cites his *Epistle 174* to the Canons of Lyons fourteen times, especially in his *Commentary on the Sentences*, when discussing Mary's sanctification.<sup>344</sup>

The feast of Our Lady's Nativity also contributed to the Saint's denial, according to Tavard: "The feast of Mary's Nativity has a special importance in Bonaventure's theology. For it was in part the existence of this feast—celebrating Mary's holiness at her birth—which led medieval theologians to denounce the feast of her conception as spurious, since Mary was believed to have been conceived in original sin."<sup>345</sup>

This is not to say St. Bonaventure used the feast to preach against the Immaculate Conception: "The feast serves as an occasion to preach on Mary as being symbolically a light for the faithful (first homily), the rising sun (second),

<sup>341</sup> Heath, *Summa*, McGraw-Hill, 113-4.

<sup>342</sup> Graef I, pp. 282-3.

<sup>343</sup> "Nullus autem invenitur dixisse de his quod audivimus auribus nostris, Virginem Mariam a peccato originali fuisse immunem." Bonaventure *In III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, art. 1, q. 2., conclus.; III; 68); Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 22.

<sup>344</sup> J.-G. Bougerol, "Saint Bonaventure et Saint Bernard," *Antonianum*, 46(1971): p. 62.

<sup>345</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 125.

an 'admirable vase' artistically fashioned and richly adorned by the Creator (third), and the Ark of the Covenant (fourth homily)."<sup>346</sup>

Chietтини says the authors are not agreed on what the Seraphic Doctor held about Mary's Immaculate Conception.<sup>347</sup> He begins with "False interpretations" of his doctrine.

### False Interpretations of Bonaventure on the Immaculate Conception

Some say he held the sinless conception of Our Lady. Chietтини divides them into three classes<sup>348</sup> : those who use the authentic works of St. Bonaventure to argue their point; those who use spurious works; and those who hold he changed his mind and adopted the belief toward the end of his life.<sup>349</sup>

Those who use authentic works of the Saint to defend his holding the Immaculate Conception try to show he attributed the debt of sin to Mary but not the sin itself. Chietтини puts the Capuchin Joseph of Leonissa first among them. His teaching can be reduced to three headings.

According to Leonissa, Bonaventure removed all stain from the Virgin when he said, "...By a special grace of God, no sin was in her." Thus, he must have removed original sin too.<sup>350</sup> Bonaventure also said Mary took away our shame, conquered the devil, and never yielded to his power, even to the slightest degree and even was immaculate: "It was also fitting that she be as immaculate in mind as she was undefiled in the flesh."<sup>351</sup> These statements do seem to remove every kind of sin, including original sin from the Mother of God. But they must be compared with what the Seraphic Doctor said elsewhere, when he was discussing whether the soul of the Blessed Virgin was sanctified before contracting original sin. While he held that it was possible and even probable that her sanctification preceded original sin, he rejected that and held the opposite: "...The sanctification of the Virgin was subsequent to the contraction of original sin, no one has been immune to the guilt of original sin except only the Son of the Virgin."<sup>352</sup>

Leonissa admits that many see here the open denial of the Immaculate Conception. But, he says, they are wrong. We must remember the Saint's un-

<sup>346</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 125.

<sup>347</sup> Chietтини p. 127.

<sup>348</sup> Chietтини, p. 128.

<sup>349</sup> Chietтини, p. 132.

<sup>350</sup> Joseph a Leonissa, O.F.M.Cap., "Dogma Immaculae Conceptionis et Doctorum Angelici ac Seraphici doctrina," *Divus Thomas* [Piacenza], 25(1904) 632-640, p. 633; "St. Bonaventura zur Unbleefleckten Empfängnis Marias," *Franziskanische Studien*. Münster, 20 (1933) 304-308.

<sup>351</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 1, c; III, 73ab.

<sup>352</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 1; III, 67b.

derstanding of original sin. He distinguishes the vice or sickness of nature from the vice of the person. That is, he holds as distinct realities a) the essence of original sin, consisting in the privation of original justice and b) the effect of that sin, which is the privation of sanctifying grace and has the nature of guilt.<sup>353</sup> Ignatius C. Brady, O.F.M., in "Mary's Assumption and medieval theologians on sin and death,"<sup>354</sup> says St. Bonaventure followed earlier Franciscans in distinguishing original justice from sanctifying grace. They had concluded that, since Adam would have transmitted original justice to his descendants, had he not sinned, that original justice cannot be supernatural. Supernatural justice cannot be so transmitted. It can only be infused by God. For Bonaventure, original justice effected Adam's conversion to God and prepared him for supernatural grace. It also actualized the body's potentiality for immortality.<sup>355</sup>

The first opinion above, that her sanctification preceded original sin, affirms that Our Lady did not contract the effect of original sin, that is, the vice of the person because her soul was sanctified before it was united to the flesh bearing the vice of nature. "...The effect of the grace of sanctity prevailed more upon the flesh than the effect of foulness upon the soul and therefore she did not contract guilt."<sup>356</sup> Tavad describes St. Bonaventure's explaining this position:

...The effect of grace was "faster in her flesh than the effect of evil in her soul." I [Tavad: L. Gl.] take this evil to be original sin as communicated by her parents in the normal way of conception. The situation would be that original sin was in fact communicated to her but was never received by her because grace acted faster than nature.<sup>357</sup>

According to this, first, opinion, the Blessed Mother, even though she contracted the vice of nature, in so far as her flesh was affected by it, she still did not contract original sin, because her soul was sanctified in the instant of creation and of union with the body. But since the vice of nature has a relation not only to the flesh but also to the soul, the Seraphic Doctor rejected it. He did so not because he held it to be in error but because it seemed to him to express the truth less faithfully than the second opinion.

In the second teaching, Our Lady's soul contracted original sin before it was sanctified. "Original sin" in this place does not designate the vice of the person but only that of nature, because the vice of nature beyond infecting the body, also affects the soul to some extent. Aristotle taught, and Bonaventure accepted, that the body was vivified, before the infusion of the spiritual,

<sup>353</sup> Chiettni, 129.

<sup>354</sup> *Theology Digest*, 2 (1954), PP. 10-14.

<sup>355</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>356</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 1, c (III, p. 67a); Chiettni, p. 129, n. 12.

<sup>357</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 20.

rational soul, by vegetative and sensitive souls. Therefore the evil of the flesh extended to the soul, so far as the soul was the form of the body. As a consequence of this, Mary would have original sin unless, in the very moment of creation, the rational soul were sanctified.<sup>358</sup> Tavard mentions the view of some persons St. Bonaventure does not name who held that Mary was sanctified in her flesh before she received a soul: "As Bonaventure shows, this opinion implies a contradiction, since the grace of sanctification presupposes a soul as the medium through which it is given."<sup>359</sup> Mary then was sanctified after the animation by the vegetative and sensitive souls and, thus, after contracting original sin. This sanctification was not after the animation by her rational soul. Our Lady thus incurred the vice of nature and, in consequence, the *debt* of the vice of the person. She did *not* contract the vice of the person.<sup>360</sup>

For Joseph of Leonissa, there is no real difference between the two opinions. They both clearly teach that Mary was free from any kind of original sin that would separate a person from God, as the vice of the person would. This freedom from sin is explained differently in the two opinions. The first opinion considers Mary in relation to God and her Redeemer. The second looks at her in relation to Adam<sup>361</sup> St. Bonaventure preferred the second opinion because it more clearly distinguishes the vice of nature from the vice of the person. Also, it demonstrates more clearly Mary's need for redemption. This need comes not only from the defilement of the flesh but also that of the soul, since the soul, along with the body, belongs to the infected or vice-infected nature.<sup>362</sup>

All this is the teaching of Joseph of Leonissa, which Chietini says he and J. Bittremieux<sup>363</sup> have had to refute. Chietini says it is an error to say the Seraphic Doctor, in the texts quoted, intended to exclude all, even original, sin from Our Lady. All the testimony brought forward goes only to show that she committed no personal sin, no sinful action of her own. The saint says she was free from "...all actual sin, mortal or venial."<sup>364</sup> He never intended to exclude *original* sin. Bittremieux points out that here Bonaventure was speaking of the sanctification following the contracting of original sin.<sup>365</sup>

Leonissa is correct, Chietini admits, about the nature of original sin as taught by St. Bonaventure. But he is mistaken in trying to argue from that to

<sup>358</sup> Leonissa, "Immac. Conc." *Divus Thomas*, pp. 639-40.

<sup>359</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 15.

<sup>360</sup> Leonissa, "Immac. Conc.," *Divus Thomas*, pp. 639-40.

<sup>361</sup> Leonissa, "S. Bonaventura und Maria," *Franziskanische Studien*, p. 304.

<sup>362</sup> Leonissa, "S. Bonaventura und Maria," *Franziskanische Studien*, p. 308.

<sup>363</sup> J. Bittremieux, "Le sentiment de S. Bonaventure sur l'Immaculée Conception de la sainte Vierge," *Etudes franciscaines*, (1928), pp. 367-94.

<sup>364</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 2, q. 1, c (III, p. 73).

<sup>365</sup> Bittremieux, "Bonaventure sur l'Immaculée Conception," *Etudes franciscaines*, 15 (1928) 387.



his defending the Immaculate Conception of Mary. Chietтини calls that argument violent and contorted and alien to the context. Chietтини says anyone who gives the slightest consideration to the matter will see at once how drastically the second opinion is different from the first and how definitely it teaches Mary had original sin and it involves guilt ["culpa"<sup>366</sup>] because it speaks of the vice of the person and of the lack of sanctifying grace.

According to St. Bonaventure, the contracting of original sin does not happen at the time of the information of the body by the lower souls, the vegetative and the sensitive. He is quite clear that original sin is contracted at the "nativitas in utero." This "nativity in the womb" occurs when the rational soul is created and is joined to the body. When he says Our Lady was sanctified after contracting original sin, this "sin" is precisely the vice of the person because it is not a case of contracting sin before the creation of the soul and its union with the flesh but concomitantly with this. Mary's sanctification occurred, not "in the first instant of the creation of the soul"<sup>367</sup> but after this creation. "Nativity in the womb comes from the joining of the soul with the flesh...For in that nativity in the womb, there comes about the contraction of original [sin - L. Gl.] and, after that<sup>368</sup> there can be sanctification."<sup>369</sup> All of which, Chietтини says, disproves the opinion that St. Bonaventure attributed only the debt of sin to Mary and not the original sin itself. This opinion, rejected by Chietтини, was also held by Del Prado, Jannotta, and Bontempus (who used spurious works).

Another group of authors has used inauthentic works of the Seraphic Doctor to prove he taught the Immaculate Conception. The Quaracchi edition of his works has sufficiently refuted them. In this class, Chietтини numbers ten names explicitly.<sup>370</sup>

Finally, Chietтини lists a third class: those who hold the Seraphic Doctor changed his teaching toward the end of his life, since he introduced the feast of the conception of the Blessed Virgin when, as Minister General of the whole order, he presided over the General Chapter celebrated in Pisa in 1263. Chietтини lists five authors here.<sup>371</sup> But, he says, they are wrong. The date of this introduction of the feast is not historically certain. But, even if Bonaventure did introduce it, it does not follow that he held the Immaculate Conception. In the *Commentary on the Sentences*, he allowed the feast to be celebrated, provided it

<sup>366</sup> Chietтини, p. 131.

<sup>367</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, ad cpp. 5; (III, p. 69).

<sup>368</sup> that is, after the creation of the (intellective) soul and its union with the flesh - Chietтини 132.

<sup>369</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, ad 1 and 2 (III, p. 72).

<sup>370</sup> Chietтини, p. 132.

<sup>371</sup> Chietтини, p. 133.

was not the day of her conception that was intended but the day of her sanctification, whenever that occurred.<sup>372</sup>

Tavard says the great Doctor was impressed by the claim that the feast was started by the revelation of God rather than by any human ideas, although the alleged revelation was only a medieval legend. The abbot of Ramsay, on an errand for William the Conqueror, was said to have prayed to the Virgin in a storm at sea. He was promised, in a vision, that he would not drown if he promised to celebrate and spread the feast of the Conception of the Virgin. The legend was taken more seriously because it was contained in a writing attributed, though wrongly, to St. Anselm of Canterbury.<sup>373</sup> Bonaventure suspected the true import of the celebration may have been, not her actual, historical conception but the sanctification that was to come.<sup>374</sup>

However, there are some who, out of special devotion, celebrate the conception of the Blessed Virgin. I dare not either entirely praise them or simply rebuke them.... I do not dare entirely to rebuke them because, as some say, this solemnity did not begin to be celebrated by human invention but by divine revelation. If this is true, without doubt it is good to celebrate her conception. But, since this is not authentic, we are not compelled to believe. Because it is also not against correct faith, we are not compelled to deny it. It could be that that solemnity refers rather to the day of sanctification rather than [the day] of conception. And, since the day of conception is certain and the day of sanctification is uncertain ...therefore, not unreasonably, the solemnity of the day of sanctification can be placed on the day of conception. And not undeservedly, because, although the day of conception ought not to be celebrated, since there was no holiness in the conception, holy souls can rejoice in that she began to be at that time ... In this way, if someone celebrates on the day of the conception, attending more to the future sanctification than to the present conception, he does not seem worthy of refutation. And therefore I have said I dare not either blame or praise such people.<sup>375</sup>

Therefore, the Seraphic Doctor could have accepted the feast without believing in the Immaculate Conception.

### The True Teaching of St. Bonaventure on the Immaculate Conception

To understand his doctrine, we have to see what the Franciscan Master held about original sin and its transmission. He taught that original sin was handed on by propagation, and was present in all who descended from Adam

<sup>372</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, ad 4 ( III, 63).

<sup>373</sup> *Epistola venerabilis Anselmi ad coepiscopos Angliae ad Conceptionem celebrandam*, PL 159, cited in Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 43, n. 4.

<sup>374</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 16.

<sup>375</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, ad 4 ( III, p. 63).

by natural generation.<sup>376</sup> The flesh, he believed, was infected in the "conceptio seminis," the "conception of the seed." Then, after forty or eighty days, when the rational soul was joined to the body, it contracted original sin from its union with the infected body. It is certain that Our Lady descended from our first parents by natural generation, not conceived virginally like her son.<sup>377</sup> For St. Bonaventure, it followed that she was contaminated. The question suggests itself: "Could not God keep the tainted flesh from communicating its corruption to the soul?" St. Bonaventure saw two possibilities.

First, God could have kept the soul of Our Lady from the corruption of the flesh by purifying the flesh before the soul was created and united with it.<sup>378</sup> Bonaventure thought this ought to be rejected, just as St. Thomas<sup>379</sup> and the *Summa* Alexander of Hales<sup>380</sup> did. God could have purified Mary's flesh before the soul was united to it. But this kind of purification would not preserve her from original sin. Since this sin consists in the privation of original justice, it cannot, in the order ordained by God, be removed without the conferral of the state of grace. "The flesh of the blessed Virgin was not sanctified before animation; not because God could not purify the flesh of the Virgin before he animated it, but because sanctification has existence through some superadded gift, which indeed has existence, not in the flesh but in the soul."<sup>381</sup>

Some say that, for the Franciscan Doctor, original justice is the same reality as sanctifying grace, or at least is not adequately distinct from it. [Adequate distinction is found between two distinct realities, neither of which is part of the other.]<sup>382</sup> Chietтини maintains, however, that many hold that the chief Scholastic theologians, like Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, and Bonaventure consider that original sin consists essentially in the privation of original justice and that the loss of sanctifying grace is the effect of that first privation. In other words, they teach an adequate distinction between original justice and sanctifying grace. That is, neither is the same reality as the other and neither is a part of the other. Chietтини lists the following authors as among the more

<sup>376</sup> Bonaventure, *II Sent.*, d. 31, a. 2, q. 1, c (II, p.749).

<sup>377</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, c (III, 62; *Ibid.*, ad 4 (III, p. 63).

<sup>378</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, ad 4 (III, p. 61).

<sup>379</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1 ; (ed. Rome, 1888-1906; VII, p. 11bc).

<sup>380</sup> Alexander of Hales, *Sum. Theol.*, p. 3, q. 9, m. 2, a. 3; Venice, 1575 ( III, p.30cd).s

<sup>381</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, c (III, p. 61).

<sup>382</sup> M. Michel, "La grâce sanctifiante et la justice originelle," *Revue Thomiste* 4(1924) 424-30; J. Stufler, *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, Innsbruck, KLVII (sic) (1923) 77-82; G. Huarte, "De distinctione inter iustitiam originalem et gratiam sanctificantem," *Gregorianum*, 5(1924) 183-207; Chietтини 136, n. 52.

illustrious to hold this second opinion: R. Martin, J. Bittremieux, J. Kors, A. Gaudel, J. Coppens, A. D'Ales. Chietтини holds this opinion,<sup>383</sup> also I. Brady.<sup>384</sup>

If original sin could be prevented by some action on the infected body, this operation would have to consist in sanctification, not in purification.<sup>385</sup> The whole question is this: could the flesh of the blessed Virgin be sanctified before animation. Chietтини says, "No." The thing sanctified is the soul, not the body. The body is sanctified only through the sanctification of the soul. If the soul does not exist, the body cannot be sanctified through it.

Sanctification has existence through some gratuitous, superadded gift, which indeed does not have existence in the flesh but in the soul. Therefore, if the flesh of the blessed Virgin is said to be sanctified, ...[possibly] this is understood by means of grace existing in her soul ...[But] it is certain that it is not by means of grace existing in her soul because then there would be discord in harmony ["oppositio in adjecto"], viz. in that the flesh would be sanctified before the creation of the soul, and still it would be sanctified in virtue of the grace of that soul; it follows that the same thing would be both before and after in the same respect.<sup>386</sup>

Some say the flesh might be sanctified by the souls of the parents. But sanctifying grace is a personal gift and cannot be transmitted from parent to child, as original justice was intended to be. "The grace of sanctification is not able to be transmitted from parent to child, like original justice."<sup>387</sup> Even if we grant it possible this grace to be passed on through generation, St. Bonaventure would not grant it could be passed on by means of the parents' libido.<sup>388</sup> "Even if it were possible that sanctification come from the parent to the child, like original justice, still it would never come by means of lustful coition."<sup>389</sup>

Since it is impossible for the soul of the Blessed Virgin to be preserved from original sin through the purification or sanctification of the body, there remains only the possibility that the soul be sanctified before being joined to the body. Since it is united to the body in the very instant of creation, there can be no real-time priority of sanctification before union for the soul. There can only be a priority in the order of nature, the atemporal priority of cause over effect.<sup>390</sup>

<sup>383</sup> Chietтини, p. 136, n. 52.

<sup>384</sup> "Mary's Assumption and mediaeval theologians on sin and death," *Theology Digest*, 2(1954) pp. 10-14.

<sup>385</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, c (III, p. 61).

<sup>386</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, c (III, pp. 61f).

<sup>387</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d.3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, c (III, p. 62).

<sup>388</sup> Chietтини, p. 137.

<sup>389</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, c (III, p. 62).

<sup>390</sup> The cause is causing at the same time that the effect is being effected. But we still think of the cause as somehow before the effect. L. Gl.

This is the second hypothesis,<sup>391</sup> that the soul of the Blessed Virgin was kept from original sin by being sanctified at the instant of its creation, "prior to" its infusion into the flesh -- but only by a priority of nature.

Some have wished to say that in the soul of the glorious Virgin, the grace of sanctification *preceded* the stain of original sin...because it was fitting that the soul of the glorious Virgin be sanctified most excellently above the souls of other saints, not only as to the abundance of sanctity but also as to the acceleration of time. Therefore, *in the instant of its creation*, grace was infused into it and *in the same instant* the soul was infused into the flesh. But because wisdom is more mobile than all mobile things, and the grace of the Holy Spirit knows no slow exertions, and grace is much stronger than nature, because of this the effect of the grace of sanctity prevails more upon the flesh than the effect of uncleanness upon the soul; and therefore, she did not contract guilt ...for the Blessed Virgin was signified by the ark but the soul of the Blessed Virgin was signified by the urn into which the manna was placed. Therefore, since the urn was filled with manna before it was placed into the ark, the soul of the Blessed Virgin was sanctified before it was united to the flesh, at least by a priority of nature [*"prius saltem per naturam"*].<sup>392</sup>

This hypothesis comes closest to the main point of the controversy. The Seraphic Doctor examines all the reasons given by the partisans of the Immaculate Conception and tries to give them all possible weight. First, the privilege is in accord with the great dignity of the Mother of God. Nor is it opposed to the honor due Christ. It even adds to it, since the glory of the Mother reflects upon the Son: "But this position seems to be able to be supported by a multiple appropriateness, both because of the outstanding honor to Christ, to whom it was fitting to be made from a most pure mother...."<sup>393</sup>

There is also an argument from the elegance of order. In Christ, original sin was entirely absent, whether as to cause, the infection of the flesh, or as to effect, the infection of the soul. In the rest of humans, it is present as to both. Therefore, it would be most fitting if someone were between Our Lord and all others, having original sin in its cause, the staining of the flesh, but not in its effect, the guilt of the soul. And the most appropriate person would be Our Lady, mediatrix between Christ and the human race.

...and also because of the elegance of order, so that, just as there was a person immune from original [sin] both in the flesh and in the soul, that is, in the cause and the effect, and there is a person having original [sin] in both ways, there might be a middle person, who would, in one way, have it and, in another way,

<sup>391</sup> Chietтини 137.

<sup>392</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c (III, p. 66f). The saint does speak of "acceleration of time," which would mean priority of time but immediately turns to "the same instant," which means *no* priority of time. L. Gl.

<sup>393</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c; (III, p. 67).

not have it; and this is the Blessed Virgin, who is mediatrix between us and Christ, as Christ is between us and God.<sup>394</sup>

Chietтини also cites the Abbot Gilbert: "In Jesus there is neither cause nor corruption; in his mother, though there is cause, there is no corruption; in all others, there is both cause and corruption."<sup>395</sup>

And, finally, Scripture seems to favor the Immaculate Conception, rather than oppose it. Scripture shows us the ark as a symbol of the Virgin Mary, the urn for the manna a symbol of her soul, and the manna itself as a sign of infused grace. Just as the urn was filled with manna before it was placed in the ark, so "at least by a priority of nature, the soul of the Blessed Virgin was sanctified before it was united to the flesh."<sup>396</sup>

Even so, no reason could be found which proved that opinion true. Did the Tradition of the Church agree with the Immaculate Conception? Or was it opposed to Christian faith? All the Fathers who wrote about the transmission of original sin said absolutely no one could be freed from it except by Christ. How can that be reconciled with the Immaculate Conception?<sup>397</sup> The Franciscan Doctor tried to answer that difficulty by saying that, in the supposition of the sanctification preceding the animation, at least in the logical order, Mary would be redeemed by Christ, like all the other saints, though in a different way. Freedom from original sin, according to this second hypothesis, can be conceived as a liberation. The Blessed Mother was preserved from the sin which was to be contracted from union with the flesh, through grace coming from Christ.<sup>398</sup> So Our Lord did not raise up his mother, already fallen, but strengthened and stabilized her so she would not fall: "For others were raised up after falling. The Virgin Mary was held up almost in the act of falling, lest she fall, as the example says of two persons falling into the mud."<sup>399</sup>

These arguments show the Saint was aware of more than a mere possibility of the preservation of Our Lady from all original sin.<sup>400</sup> The Seraphic Doctor urged these arguments for the Immaculate Conception as strongly as he could. But they did not seem strong enough to prove it. He turned away from that position and held, instead, "...the sanctification of the Virgin followed the contraction of original sin."<sup>401</sup>

<sup>394</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c (III, p. 67).

<sup>395</sup> Gilbert, Abbott; "Sermo 40," n. 6; PL 184, 211.

<sup>396</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c (III, p. 67).

<sup>397</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, fund. 2 and 3, and c (III, pp. 66 & 68).

<sup>398</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c (III, p. 67).

<sup>399</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c (III, p. 67).

<sup>400</sup> Chietтини p.140.

<sup>401</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c (III, p. 67).

Was this a posterity of time or only of nature? Most authors say, with Le Bachelet, Bittremieux, and Schultzer, that the Saint held it was of time.

But if it is asked on what day or hour she was sanctified, this is not known; but it is believed with probability that the infusion of grace occurred promptly after ["cito post"] the infusion of the soul.<sup>402</sup>

She was sanctified in her mother's womb immediately after ["statim post"] the infusion of the soul and its union with her body.<sup>403</sup>

The expression "cito post" signifies time in the authors of the period.<sup>404</sup>

The spotless Virgin was freed from sin already contracted not from sin just about to be contracted. It is a case of original sin itself, not, as Joseph of Leonissa contends, just the debt of original sin. He says it was only the "vitium" of nature but it was the "vitium" of the person and involved the privation of sanctifying grace. The Seraphic Doctor explicitly holds that no one besides Christ was free from original sin<sup>405</sup> and that Our Lady herself was wounded by this guilt.<sup>406</sup> In the Saint's teaching, original sin insofar as it indicates guilt ["culpa"], includes aversion from God and the lack of sanctifying grace: "...in so far as it is guilt, ...it is properly in the soul according to free choice ["secundum liberum arbitrium"] and especially according to the will," and it makes "...the soul hateful to God."<sup>407</sup>

What were the arguments the Seraphic Doctor used to prove this thesis?

First, that of authority. Almost all the saints were adversaries of the Immaculate Conception.<sup>408</sup> That could be called an extrinsic argument. The first of the intrinsic arguments is the teaching of revelation about the universality of original sin. Our Lady was not, as Christ was, excepted from it, because she was not, as Christ was, virginally conceived. "It is not rationally thought that she who was born of the pleasure of man would lack original sin.<sup>409</sup> Because she was conceived according to the common custom ...therefore she contracted original sin."<sup>410</sup>

The penalties, too, to which Our Lady was subjected cannot be explained apart from the guilt of original sin. They cannot be justified by the infection

<sup>402</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 3, c (III, p. 71).

<sup>403</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.M.V., sermo 2* ( IX, p. 641).

<sup>404</sup> Consult Schultzer, Le Bachelet, Scheeben, Balič ; Chiettoni, 141, n. 69.

<sup>405</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c (III, p. 67).

<sup>406</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, fund. 5 ( III, p. 66).

<sup>407</sup> Bonaventure, *II Sent.*, d. 31, a. 1, q. 2, c ( II, p. 744).

<sup>408</sup> Bonaventure, *II Sent.*, d. 31, a. 1, q. 2, fund. 1 and 6, c (III, pp. 66 , 68a).

<sup>409</sup> Bonaventure, *II Sent.*, d. 31, a.1, q. 2, ad 1 (III, p. 68).

<sup>410</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.M.V. sermo 1* (IX, p. 634).

of the flesh alone, for that does not include the disordination of the will nor, consequently, guilt.<sup>411</sup> That cannot be the reason to penalize Our Lady. God is a just judge and he does not punish without guilt. Nor can it be argued that the Blessed Mother contracted her sufferings and natural infirmities, not from necessity but by God's arrangement, for the salvation of the human race, just as did Our Lord. That would mean Jesus Christ was not the sole Redeemer of mankind, which suggestion dishonors him.

If the Blessed Virgin lacked original sin, she lacked the merit of death: therefore, either an injustice was done her, when she died, or she died by arrangement for the salvation of the human race. But the first leads to insult to God because, if that is true, God is not a just rewarder; the second leads to insult to Christ, because, if that is true, Christ is not a sufficient Redeemer; consequently, both are false and impossible. It remains, therefore, that she had original sin.<sup>412</sup>

#### Excursus: Death as Punishment for Original Sin

"...Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned."<sup>413</sup>

...The first man, Adam ...disobeyed ...and consequently incurred the death with which God had previously threatened him...<sup>414</sup>

...Bodily death from which man would have been immune had he not sinned...<sup>415</sup>

According to Scriptural, conciliar and medieval sources, it seems to be common, if not Catholic doctrine, that death for all humans is a consequence of, a punishment for, the sin of our first parents.

Medieval theologians developed more theoretical details, saying original justice, different from sanctifying grace, because transmittable to offspring, would have been the source of immortality for the whole human race and the original sin destroyed it. St. Thomas says, in his *Scriptum super Sententias*:

We must be aware that the first human could have had two kinds of original justice. One original justice which was according to the due order of the body under the soul, of the lower powers under the higher, and the higher under God;

<sup>411</sup> "culpam:" Chietini 142.

<sup>412</sup> Bonaventure, *II Sent.*, d. 31, a. 1, q. 2, fund. 4 (III, p. 66); cf. *ibid.*, c (III, p. 67); *ibid.*, d. 15, a. 1, q. 3, ad 4 and 5 (III, p. 335); Bittremieux, *Art. cit.*, *Etudes franciscaines*, 40 (1928), 376.

<sup>413</sup> Romans 5: 12 (Jerusalem Bible).

<sup>414</sup> Council of Trent, Sess. 5, canon 1, Denziger 788, *The Church teaches*, J. Clarkson et al., eds. (Rockford, Ill.: Tan Books, 1973), p. 158. f, Vatican One, (Unpromulgated) Dogmatic Constitution on the Principal Mysteries of the Faith, Chapter 3, *The Church Teaches*, no. 385, p. 162.

<sup>415</sup> Vatican Council Two, *Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world*, no. 18, *Vatican Council II: the conciliar and post conciliar documents* ed. A. Flannery (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1975) p. 918.



and this justice, by divine gift, ordered human nature itself in its beginning; and therefore such justice would have been handed on to the children. For there is another gratuitous justice which places meritorious acts, and there are two opinions about it. For some say that the first human was created with only natural gifts, and not gratuitous ones; and according to this, it seems that some preparations through personal acts, is required for such justice; therefore, according to this, such grace was a personal property on the part of the soul; and therefore in no way would it have been handed on, unless to the extent of a pure aptitude. But others say that man was created in grace; and, according to this it seems that the gift of gratuitous justice was conferred on human nature itself; therefore grace was infused with the handing on of nature.<sup>416</sup>

Whatever might have happened to children born before sin, in the *Summa Theologiae*, he is definite that sin destroyed original justice and immortality:

...The sin of the first parent is the cause of death and of all the defects of this kind in human nature, insofar as through the sin of the first parent, there was taken away original justice, through which not only the lower powers of the soul were contained under reason without any disordination, but the whole body was kept subject to the soul without any defect, ...And therefore, when this original justice was removed through the sin of the first parent, just as human nature was wounded as to the soul through the disordination of potencies,...so also was it made corruptible through the disordination of the body itself. The removal of original justice had the nature of a penalty, just like the removal of grace. Therefore also death and all resulting defects of the body are punishments for original sin.<sup>417</sup>

<sup>416</sup> Aquinas, *II Sent.*, d. 20, q. 2, a. 3, c. Sciendum est ergo quod duplex iustitia primo homini poterat convenire. Una originalis, quae erat secundum debitum ordinem corporis sub anima, et inferiorem virium sub superiori, et superioris sub Deo; et haec quidem iustitia ipsam naturam humanam ordinabat in sui primordio ex divino munere; et ideo talem iustitiam in filios transfudisset. Est etiam alia iustitia gratuita quae actus meritorios elicit, et de hac est duplex opinio. Quidam enim dicunt quod primus homo in naturalibus tantum creatus est, et non in gratuitis; et secundum hoc videtur quod ad talem iustitiam requirebatur quaedam praeparatio per actus personales; unde secundum hoc talis gratia proprietatis personalis erat ex parte animae; et ideo, sicut nullo modo transfusa fuisset, nisi secundum aptitudinem tantum. Alii vero dicunt quod homo in gratia creatus est; et secundum hoc videtur quod donum gratuita iustitiae ipsi humanae naturae collatum sit; unde cum transfusione naturae simul etiam infusa fuisset gratia.

<sup>417</sup> Aquinas, I-II, 85, 5, c. ...Peccatum primi parentis est causa mortis et omnium huiusmodi defectuum in natura humana, inquantum per peccatum primi parentis sublata est originalis iustitia, per quam non solum inferiores animae vires continebantur sub ratione absque omni deordinatione, sed totum corpus continebatur sub anima absque omni defectu, ...Et ideo, subtracta hac originalis iustitia per peccatum primi parentis, sicut vulnerata est humana natura quantum ad animam per deordinationem potentiarum, ...ita etiam est corruptibilis effecta per deordinationem ipsius corporis. Subtractio enim originalis iustitiae habet rationem poenae, sicut etiam subtractio gratiae. Unde etiam mors, et omnes defectus corporales consequentes, sunt quaedam poenae originalis peccati.

St. Bonaventure seems to have held the same.

As to the state of innocence, the human could be said to be immortal by nature and also immortal by grace, because he has the aptitude from nature but has completion from grace.

.....

For the body was very well fitted together, and the soul was of itself incorruptible, and it ruled that body and conserved it; and thus the first man, constituted of these was suited never to fail through the *incompatibility of [his] elements*. But however that was not enough; for a sinful soul could not do this, if it were placed in an exactly similar body.<sup>418</sup> And therefore to that soul was given a gift of *grace*, through which it could preside over the body and rule it and keep its elements in a certain friendship and subject it to its own authority as long as it wished. And this gift of grace Anselm called *original justice*.<sup>419</sup>

...Immortality therefore is the same as the potency or aptitude for not dying. And this potency for not dying is not other than the power of the soul in ruling and keeping up the body, so that it never fails or is separated from it.<sup>420</sup>

According to Fr. Ignatius Brady,<sup>421</sup> St. Bonaventure generally holds to the teaching of the earlier Franciscans on sin and death but makes some changes. He distinguishes the creation of man from the gift of original justice and that, from sanctifying grace. Creation, giving man the image of God in his soul, gives no more than the capacity for conversion to God. In Adam, this potentiality was actuated by original justice. This brought about conversion to God and was a preparation for sanctifying grace. By creation itself, man is neither mor-

<sup>418</sup> Explanatory note by Quaracchi editors: "Sensus est: si haec, scil. regere et conservare tale corpus, ex parte animae essent quid mere naturale, tunc anima quoque peccatrix ista praestare posset; sed non potest, quia mors secuta est peccatum." "The meaning is: if this, viz., to rule and conserve such a body, were something merely natural on the part of the soul, then also a sinful soul could do it; but it cannot, because death followed sin." *In II Sent.*, d. 19, a. 3, q. 2 (II, p. 470, n. 1).

<sup>419</sup> Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d. 19, a. 3, q. 1, conclus.(II, pp. 469f). *Immortalis* quantum ad statum innocentiae dici poterat homo per *naturam*, immortalis etiam per *gratiam*, quia a natura habet *aptitudinem*, sed a gratia habet *completionem*.....Nam corpus valde bene erat complexionatum, et anima de se incorruptibilis erat, quae illud corpus regebat et conservabat; et ita idoneus erat primus homo ex his constitutus, quod numquam deficeret per *elementorum pugnam*. Sed tamen illud non sufficebat; hoc enim non posset anima peccatrix facere, si poneretur in consimili corpore. Et ideo datum fuit illi anmae donum *gratiae*, per quam posset corpori praesidere et illud regere et elementa quasi in quadam amicitia custodire, et hoc, quamdiu vellet, suo auctori subiacere. Hoc autem donum gratiae vocat Anselmum *iustitiam originalem*.

<sup>420</sup> Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d. 19, a. 3, q. 2, conclus. (II, p. 472). ...Immortalitas igitur idem est quod potentia sive aptitudo ad non moriendum. Et haec potentia ad non moriendum non est aliud quam potentia animae in regendo et continuando corpus, ut numquam deficiat nec ab ea separatur.

<sup>421</sup> *Proceedings of the First Franciscan Marian Conference in Acclamation of the Dogma of the Assumption, Oct. 8-11, 1950*. It was condensed and re-printed in *Theology Digest*; 2(1954) 10-14.

tal nor immortal. Apart from original justice, Adam's body was indifferent. It was not necessarily mortal or immortal. The harmony of body and soul and the well-balanced elements in the body gave it an aptitude for immortality. The body's composition gave it a natural potency to death and corruption. God added to nature original or natural justice. This actualized the body's potency for immortality and kept the opposite tendency, to corruption, from actualization.<sup>422</sup> Justice, inhering in the *liberum arbitrium*, was the principal cause of immortality, by conferring on the soul the power to rule the body and to keep everything in proper order to God. Then, a while later, the greater privilege of sanctifying grace was added to created nature and original justice.<sup>423</sup>

Adam's sin cost him both original justice and grace. The loss of original justice meant the soul was unable to hold the body in everlasting life. The opposite tendency of the body, to corruption and death, was actualized. He, and we, were now subject to death.<sup>424</sup> A basic potency for death is natural to us. For the Seraphic Doctor, however, death itself is not natural but is a punishment. It is not demanded either by human nature or by the union of soul and body. Nature desires their permanent union. Both elements naturally tend to resist separation. If not for sin and the consequent loss of justice, the soul would always be united to the body. It was created thus. This permanent union, however, would not be by its natural power. Union with the soul gives the body the possibility of immortality. Even now, the temporary union with the soul sows the seeds of everlasting life, which will bloom on the last day. Resurrection will fulfill God's original intention of permanent oneness.<sup>425</sup>

In view of all the above, it can be said that both St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure, like medievals in general, hold that death is a punishment for original sin. All seem to agree that, by sinning, Adam lost original justice, whether that was natural or supernatural. In his early *Exposition on the Sentences*, Aquinas agreed with Bonaventure and the early Franciscans that it was natural and thus could have, would have been handed on to his children.<sup>426</sup> Later, in the *Summa theologiae*, he said it was supernatural, that it included sanctifying grace and other gifts, such as immortality. Adam lost these for himself and his offspring. Grace, immortality, and the other gifts would have been handed down, just as original sin is now transmitted.<sup>427</sup> "...Sicut rebellio carnalis appetitus ad spiritum est poena peccati primorum parentum, ita etiam et mors ..." ["...As

<sup>422</sup> Brady, p.12.

<sup>423</sup> Brady, p. 12.

<sup>424</sup> Brady, p. 12.

<sup>425</sup> Brady, pp. 12f.

<sup>426</sup> Aquinas, *In II Sent.*, d. 20, q. 2, a3., c. et ad 3.

<sup>427</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 100, 1, c.

the rebellion of the carnal appetite against the spirit is a punishment of the sin of the first parents, so also is death..." Thus, death, the lack of immortality, comes to us, according to the medievals and St. Paul, as a punishment for sin.

Let us conclude with some modern ideas on death as a punishment for sin. Contemporary theologians see death more as a basically natural event. In general, animals and plants all seem to die. McDade says, "Death is a biological fact of all organic life."<sup>428</sup> Only the amoeba avoids death and only by dividing into two parts, which go on dividing and losing their identities, a sort of death. R. Anderson says, "The biological organism was given its own temporal and finite life span in both the human and the non-human natural form. Sin caused a separation between the human person and the life-sustaining promise and gift of immortality which comes from God alone."<sup>429</sup>

Karl Rahner seems to agree:

Since death ...cannot be both the consequence of sin and dying with Christ at the same time, ...then death must have a proper, natural essence, which contains the potentiality of dying in both directions<sup>430</sup> and which is finally reduced to one or the other of these possibilities by the attitude with which man ...sustains this natural essence.<sup>431</sup>

For moderns, then there is a distinction between one kind of death and another. Burrell and Malits seem to say this clearly:

...When Paul says that "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), we need not interpret the biological fact of death as the consequence of sin. Rather, because of the way in which sin has become the context of our lives, death has been turned into the reality we most feel and fear. In a disordered creation, death comes to stand for something yet more sinister than itself.<sup>432</sup>

.....

This syndrome [terror of death, rather than simple fear: L. Gl.] dissolves once we accept the universe as freely created. Then my life, moral as it is, becomes a gift bestowed, which invites me to *spend* it so that it returns enhanced to its giver. The fear of death will not evaporate, but the dynamics that escalate it into terror are displaced and neutralized by the visage of a creator.<sup>433</sup>

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<sup>428</sup> J. McDade, "Creation and salvation: green faith and Christian themes," *The Month* 23(1990), p. 438.

<sup>429</sup> R. Anderson, *Theology, death, and dying* (Oxford: B. Bblackwell, 1986), p. 5.

<sup>430</sup> That is, the possibility of being a punishment for sin or the possibility of being a salvific union with Christ. L. Gl.

<sup>431</sup> K. Rahner, *On the theology of death*, transl. C. Henkey, *Quaestiones disputatae*, no. 2 (New York: Herder & Herder, 1962), p. 44.

<sup>432</sup> D. Burrell and E. Malits, *Original peace: restoring God's creation* (New York: Paulist Press, 1997, p. 30.

<sup>433</sup> Burrell, Malits, p. 32.

...We are able to accept what comes naturally, the ending of our life, only in the measure that we have been moved to see our lives as something other than a life-project. If the focus has been shifted to returning a gift, then we can consider the impending end as offering a completed gift, however imperfect, to the One who gifted us with life initially...<sup>434</sup>

These wise and comforting words of Burrell and Malits advise us about our life and death, now, under our present, post-Adamite circumstances, not about what our death or earthly-life-ending might have been without original sin. And this, in spite of their title, *Original peace* and their quoting St. Paul's reference to original sin. But they do seem to differ from the earlier view that death *as such*, not a particular kind of death, was the consequence of sin.

Rahner's opinion is more compatible with the medieval. He holds that, in Paradise, Adam was immortal and this was a gift, a consequence of the greater gift of sanctifying grace. Rahner says, "...The gift of immortality in Paradise was a connatural consequence of supernatural grace."<sup>435</sup> If Adam had not sinned, then, according to Rahner, he would have ended his earthly life with an act of "pure, active, self-affirmation," a crowning, glorious transition, which he calls "death," in quotation marks and "a death without dying."<sup>436</sup>

To me, "death without dying" seems confusing, even Hegelian. I would prefer to omit the word "death" here, speak only of a transition, self-affirmation, or glorification, and even deny that "death," in *any* way we ordinarily understand or use the word, would have occurred. I hope I may be forgiven my disagreement with the vast authority of Karl Rahner. In poor reparation, let me praise his teaching as agreeing with Scripture and Councils, above all, and also with the great medieval Doctors.

It seems to me that Adam and Eve would have had to have some end to their earthly life, however glorious and self-affirming that end might be. In Paradise, they were not yet in heavenly glory. Some transition yet awaited them. Had they remained faithful, it would have been something very different from our present death, which is, in most of its circumstances, if not in its essence, a fearsome punishment for sin. As for the rest of bodily life, fearing to bestow either earthly immortality or heavenly glory on all the bugs, bats, and bacteria, I leave them to the authority of biologists.

A question remains: why do contemporary Catholic theologians so cautiously differentiate death-as-punishment from death-as-natural? In my opinion, the vast, well-earned popular reverence for natural science has changed the intellectual environment from that of the Middle Ages, when study of nature received

<sup>434</sup> Burrell, Malits, p. 39.

<sup>435</sup> K. Rahner, *Death*, p. 55.

<sup>436</sup> K. Rahner, *Death*, p. 42.

little respect. Scientists see the universality of death as a natural, inescapable fact, quite separate from any divine judgment. Theologians must take this into account.

### St. Bonaventure on Christ: The Universal Savior

Christ is not only the only Saviour, he is also the universal Savior. No one is saved except by him. According to Scripture and the authority of the saints, absolutely no one is exempt from this law.<sup>437</sup> To the argument that Mary was redeemed by her Son but in a different way, being held, lest she fall,<sup>438</sup> the Saint's answer is that redemption includes only the guilty: "No one belongs to the redemption of Christ except those who have guilt: therefore, if the Blessed Virgin lacked original sin, it seems that she would not pertain to the redemption of Christ."<sup>439</sup>

To those who might say the Immaculate Conception is appropriate to the great dignity of the Blessed Mother, the Seraphic Doctor replied that if she were free of original sin, she would also be outside the redemption of Christ. But since he receives greater glory from the souls he has redeemed when they are holier, if the Virgin Mary were excluded from his redemption, he would lose the highest glory.

If ...the Blessed Virgin lacked original sin, it seems she would not pertain to the redemption of Christ. But Christ has great glory from the saints he has redeemed: therefore if he did not redeem the Blessed Virgin, he would be deprived of the noblest glory. Therefore, if this is profane and impious to say, it seems that, etc.<sup>440</sup>

Chiettni concludes that the Seraphic Doctor never arrived at the concept of Duns Scotus about preservative redemption. It remained for the Subtle Doctor to demonstrate how the Mother of God, even if she was preserved from original sin, was not only redeemed but was more redeemed than other Christians and Christ received more glory by redeeming her than from his redemption of all others.<sup>441</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor was not without reason in joining those who opposed the Immaculate Conception. The strongest argument was that from authority. He also had intrinsic reasons. Some think he was almost coerced by the number and dignity of the opponents of the Immaculate Conception, while his own

<sup>437</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c (III, p. 68); *ibid.* (III, p. 66).

<sup>438</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c (III, p. 67).

<sup>439</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, fund. 5 (III, p. 66).

<sup>440</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3., p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, fund. 5 (III, p. 66).

<sup>441</sup> Scotus, *Op. Oxon.*, *III Sent.*, d. 3, q. 1; 22-23; Chiettni, p. 143, n. 80.

desires were to support it.<sup>442</sup> But the Saint was inwardly convinced that the privilege could not be firmly demonstrated.<sup>443</sup>

And because this honor [freedom from all, even original, sin] is of the Son of God alone ...therefore it is not to be attributed to the Virgin. Sufficient for the Virgin are the other dignities which her Son communicated and gave to her, in which she surpasses human praises and devotions; and therefore, one ought not make up new honors for the honor of the Virgin. She does not need our falsehood, who is so full of truth.<sup>444</sup>

So far, only the Seraphic Doctor's *Commentary on the Sentences* has been considered. Only here did he treat the Immaculate Conception *ex professo*. The only other places of any importance, according to Chietтини, are a few of his sermons.<sup>445</sup> But since several authors hold that the Saint changed his mind after commenting on the *Sentences*, it is worth the trouble of looking at the later writings.<sup>446</sup>

There are some writings which, at first glance, at least, seem to favor the privilege. Mary is likened "...to the sun, without clouds, glistening at its rising, because in her origin, [she] had purity from of sin."<sup>447</sup> He also says Mary was "...specially born without original sin."<sup>448</sup>

But how can anyone demonstrate that "origin [ortus]" means the moment of infusion of the human soul, Bonaventure's "nativity in the womb?" The context shows the opposite. The grace which Our Lady received is called the grace of purification, which is something which follows a staining. The Franciscan Master said: "The most glorious Virgin is likened to the sunlight because of the beauty of the grace of purification."<sup>449</sup> Also, she had "...beauty in her origin through purgative grace."<sup>450</sup> Other words, following close after the second text ("specially born without original sin") indicate the same: "The Virgin Mary, in her conception, contracting original sin through the general law, was bound to the root of the human race but afterward, sanctified, was not bent back to it."<sup>451</sup>

<sup>442</sup> L. Romani, "S. Bonaventura e l'Immacolata Concezione," *L'Oriente Seraphico* (Assisi) 16(1904), 444; "... Certes son coeur le portait plutôt vers l'opinion pieuse," Bittremieux, *loc. cit.*, *Etudes Franciscaines*, 40 (1928), 373.

<sup>443</sup> Chietтини, p. 144.

<sup>444</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, ad 3 ( III, p. 68).

<sup>445</sup> Chietтини, p. 144.

<sup>446</sup> Chietтини, p. 144.

<sup>447</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 2; IX, p. 709.

<sup>448</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 7; IX, p. 720 .

<sup>449</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 2; IX, p. 709.

<sup>450</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 2 (IX, p. 708); cf. *ibid.*, *sermo* 6 (IX, p. 719).

<sup>451</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 7 ( IX, p. 720).

Also the words preceding that text: "The Blessed Virgin, although conceived in original sin, was born without original sin."<sup>452</sup>

In his sermons, St. Bonaventure opposed the Immaculate Conception, as this proves: "The glorious Virgin ...was purified ...inwardly according to truth ...and therefore needed baptismal, or equivalent, grace, for she was conceived in the usual way and therefore contracted original sin."<sup>453</sup>

Chietini adds, "Let it not be said the Seraphic One attributed to the Virgin only the debt of sin, since he also required for her the grace of regeneration."<sup>454</sup>

Therefore, Our Lady was not sanctified before her corruption by original sin, nor did she become the "sanctified vessel" before grace removed "the dross from the silver."<sup>455</sup> "Remove the dross (rubigo) from silver and it comes forth perfectly purified."<sup>456</sup> Grace did not save her soul from sin to be contracted but from sin already incurred.

The integrity of human nature in the glorious Virgin is designated by "silver," but by "dross" is meant original sin, which she contracted in the womb of her mother. Through "removal of dross from silver," I understand sanctifying grace, by which she was sanctified by an excellent grace, through which the original guilt was removed from her, as far as stain, viz. in her mind.<sup>457</sup>

Chietini says almost all modern authors agree with him that the saint did not support Mary's Immaculate Conception. He mentions Bittremieux, Pauwels, Malines, Mariotti, Scheeben, Pohle, Campana, Terrien, and Balić. Even the older authors agree that he did not maintain it in his *Commentary on the Sentences*. The more we learn about the Middle Ages, the clearer it is that all the great Scholastics, e.g. Albert the Great, Hales, and St. Thomas Aquinas agree with St. Bonaventure.<sup>458</sup>

To the progress and clarification of the doctrine, St. Bonaventure contributed greatly. J. Perrone says, "St. Bonaventure is rightly considered to be easily the first of all, by analytic reason, accurately to explain the controversy in its distinct parts."<sup>459</sup> M. J. Scheeben says:

It is precisely in Bonaventure that the form of this question appears most clearly. Just as, among the older Scholastics, he is the only one who, after the question about the sanctification of the flesh before animation, expressly raises the further

<sup>452</sup> Bonaventure, *ibid.* (IX, p. 719).

<sup>453</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.M.V., sermo 1* (IX, p. 634).

<sup>454</sup> Chietini, p. 145.

<sup>455</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.M.V., sermo 1* (IX, p. 634).

<sup>456</sup> Prov. 25:4 (NAB).

<sup>457</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.M.V., sermo 1*; IX, p. 634.

<sup>458</sup> Chietini, p. 146 and n. 94.

<sup>459</sup> *De Immaculato B. V. Mariæ Conceptu an dogmatico decreto definiri possit disquisitio theologica*. "Monasterii (sic)"; 1848.



question: whether the *soul* of the Blessed Virgin was sanctified before contracting original sin.<sup>460</sup>

Thomas Aquinas,<sup>461</sup> Albert the Great,<sup>462</sup> and Alexander of Hales<sup>463</sup> were asking about the sanctification of Our Lady before or after her animation, in the temporal order. The Franciscan Master also spoke of the instant of animation and seems to prepare the way for Duns Scotus by distinguishing between the order of nature and that of time. P. Minges says:

Certainly he [Bonaventure] prepared the way for Scotus by saying, "Others were raised up after falling" ...For Scotus was the first who expressly distinguished between the orders of nature and of time. According to the order of nature, Mary was a daughter of Adam before she was sanctified; in the order of time, her soul was created and sanctified at the same moment.<sup>464</sup>

Chietтини says the Seraphic Doctor promoted the arguments on both sides of the question.<sup>465</sup> He seems not too far from the solution proposed by Duns Scotus when he tries to refute the argument against the Immaculate Conception taken from the universality and necessity of redemption. For others were raised up after falling. The Virgin Mary, almost in the very act of falling, was supported as she fell, as in the example of two falling in the mud.<sup>466</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor did not teach the Immaculate Conception but he brought her sanctification as near to the first moment of her existence as he could, almost as if he were trying to approximate an Immaculate Conception! He says, in his *Commentary on the Sentences*:

"But if it is asked on what day or at which hour she was sanctified, this is not known; but it is believed with probability that after the infusion of her soul, the infusion of grace happened *quickly* (emphasis added)."<sup>467</sup>

This is a careful, academic statement. In preaching, he went from "quickly" to "immediately;" "She was sanctified in her mother's womb *immediately*

<sup>460</sup> *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, Freiburg i. Br., 1882; III, 552-3.

<sup>461</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1 (VII, pp. 11ff) (Leonine).

<sup>462</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 3, a. 4 & 5 (XXVIII, pp. 46ff) (Paris, 1890-99).

<sup>463</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, p. 3, q. 9, m. 2, a. 3 & 4 (III, pp. 30 ff).

<sup>464</sup> "Der heilige Thomas über die Lehre von der Unbefleckten Empfängnis der Mutter Gottes;" *Franziskanische Studien*, Münster i. W., 12(1925) 297-311; cf. J. Pohle, *Lehrbuch der Dogmatik*. Paderborn, 1903, II, p. 269.

<sup>465</sup> Cf. B. Piazza, *Causa Immaculatae Conceptionis sanctissimae Matris Dei Mariae Dominae nostrae*. Coloniae, 1751, p. 319.

<sup>466</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c.; III, p. 67.

<sup>467</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 3, c.; III, p. 71. "Si autem quaeratur, qua die vel hora sanctificata fuerit, hoc ignoratur; probabiliter tamen creditur, quod cito post infusionem animae fuerit facta infusio gratiae."

(emphasis added) after the infusion of her soul and its union with the body."<sup>468</sup> Speaking of an opinion held by others, the Seraphic Doctor shows, by the warmth of his language, the attraction he feels for a very early sanctification:

In words that are almost a translation, Tavard says, for Bonaventure: She must be above the saints not only in "abundance of holiness," but also in "acceleration of time." In her case, the Holy Spirit, working above what nature does, shortened the normal course of time. "Therefore at the instant of her creation, grace was infused in the flesh." Because "wisdom is faster than all that is fast" (Wis. 7:24)<sup>469</sup>...and "grace is much more powerful than nature," the effect of grace was faster in the flesh than the effect of evil in her soul."<sup>470</sup>

Tavard continues to say the Franciscan Master admits this early, prenatal sanctification is not mentioned in Scripture but finds it normal that the New Testament omits it, since the Gospels begin with John the Baptist and Our Lady was born before him. Still, he says, the pre-birth sanctification is supported by Scripture, since the New Testament mentions the uterine sanctification of the Baptist and the Old Testament that of Jeremiah and Mary's holiness was greater than theirs.<sup>471</sup>

With regard to the Immaculate Conception, the two Doctors are in agreement, both as to denying the privilege and as to allowing Mary the greatest and the earliest possible sanctity compatible with Christ's redemption of all humans.

### Downgrading Mary? Our Two Saints and Vatican II

Both of these Doctors of the Church, in denying to Mary an Immaculate Conception, were doing what the Council Fathers of Vatican II did: they were seeing Mary in union with the Church. The Council taught about Mary in Chapter 8 of the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium*, saying more

<sup>468</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purificatione B.V.M.*, Sermo II, no. 1; IX, p. 641. "...Fuit sanctificata in utero matris statim post animae suae infusionem et unionem cum suo corpore..."

<sup>469</sup> For wisdom is more mobile than any motion . . . "Wisdom of Solomon," 7:24, RSV. ... Decebat animam gloriosae Virginis sanctificari excellentissime super animas aliorum Sanctorum, non solum quantum ad abundantiam sanctitatis, sed etiam quantum ad accelerationem temporis; ideo in instanti suae creationis fuit sibi gratia infusa, et in eodem instanti anima infusa est carni. Sed quia omnium mobilium mobilior est sapientia (Sap. 7:24)

<sup>470</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, c; III, p. 66f. et "nescit tarda molimina Spiritus Sancti gratia," et multo potentior est gratia quam natura; hinc est, quod effectus gratiae sanctitatis magis praevaluit in carnem quam effectus foeditatis in animam;... Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 20.

<sup>471</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, 24; "In *novo* habetur de sanctificatione Joannis, in *veteri* de sanctificatione Jeremiae; . . . Et ex hoc quasi *a minori* colligitur . . . cum sanctitas Virginis excedat Ieremiae et Joannis puritatem et virginitatem." Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 3, conclus.; III, p. 71.

about her than all other ecumenical councils combined. Yet the Council was, at the time, almost universally characterized as “downgrading Mary.” Vatican II had *no* such intention. Nor did St. Bernard, St. Albert the Great, St. Thomas or St. Bonaventure. They wanted to see Our Lady in union with the Church, in union with the multitudes saved by Christ. The Fathers of Vatican II in *no* way “downgraded” Mary. Those who wanted a separate document on Our Lady may *choose* to see it that way. But it is not a downgrading to be included in God’s plan of salvation. Thomas, Bonaventure, et al. may have downgraded her in some sense, or at least opposed the “upgrade” of an Immaculate Conception. But they basically wanted to include her in the economy of salvation. Not in itself a “downgrade.”

For: what doth it profit a woman to be immaculately conceived and not be *in the Church*, not be a member of Christ, not benefit from his saving work? God could create a human being, perhaps a tiny embryo, independently of a human father and mother, then implant it in a womb or otherwise see to its maturing. The “technology” does not matter, as long as this human being was not begotten of the sinful seed of Adam. Such a person would be “immaculately conceived” in the literal, *negative* sense, “without ‘macula,’” without stain of original sin. That absence of sin would not necessarily involve the presence of grace. (Mary, as we know now, after *Ineffabilis Deus*, was immaculately conceived *positively*, by an inundation, an avalanche of the grace of Christ.)

Suppose the human race in general were granted salvation by God. (It would not necessarily require the Incarnation of a divine person.) This race-wide sanctification would not benefit the hypothetically immaculate one because she would not be connected to the human race, except by a similarity. And it would be doubtful if she could belong to the new community of salvation, this now-established church.<sup>472</sup> Of course, there are no limits to God’s power. Perhaps an act of faith might bridge the gap. But there would be a gap in need of bridging.

Now let us consider the opposite possibility. What if a savior, divine or otherwise, were born of this imaginary immaculate, isolated woman? *Now* the question is: what doth it profit our whole human race that a savior is born with no connection to us? Salvation would be available to the sinless parent of this savior. But to the rest of us? The infinite power and mercy of God would care for us in any case. However, that infinite power and mercy *has*, in fact, cared

<sup>472</sup> The same problem arises with regard to a possible race of rational creatures encountered in space flight. Are they fallen, affected by original sin? Are they saved? May we baptize them and receive them into the Church?

for us, by providing to our Savior a mother who is part of the human race, who is a daughter of Adam and Eve.

St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure appreciated that connection to the human race. Yes, they did deny Our Lady her Immaculate Conception. But they joined her firmly to the rest of us. *Her* salvation would also be ours. *Deo gratias!* Even if, apparently, she had to share in our original sin. They did not intend to “downgrade” Mary, any more than did the Fathers of Vatican II. All of them, medieval and modern, wanted to include Mary – and us! -- in the saving work of Christ.

How does the Immaculate Conception relate to Mary’s whole vocation? F. Jelly answers: “As the first fruits of the Son’s redemption, Mary is uniquely redeemed *objectively* (the Immaculate Conception). In responding with complete openness to God’s word at the Annunciation and the various events of her pilgrimage of faith throughout her spiritual odyssey, she is uniquely redeemed *subjectively*.”<sup>473</sup>

The Anglican scholar, John Maquarrie, seeks a positive statement of the Immaculate Conception:

So in our search for more personal ways of speaking, we find ourselves also moving to more affirmative ways. Instead of putting the dogma of Immaculate Conception in the negative form by stating that Mary was preserved from the stain of original sin, we may put it in an affirmative way and say she was preserved in a right relatedness to God. An equivalent affirmative expression would be to say that she was always the recipient of grace. She was surrounded with grace from her original conception in the mind of God to her actual historical conception in the love of her parents.<sup>474</sup>

### 3. Comparison of the Two Doctors on Mary’s Predestination and Preparation

St. Thomas says Mary received, gratuitously, a share in Christ’s predestination. Not even Our Lord could merit the Incarnation, nor could she merit, even after the Incarnation was decreed, that it take place through her. By cooperating with gratuitous, predestined graces, she merited *de congruo* that it take place through her.

St. Bonaventure says Mary was eternally predestined to be Mother of God and to receive the appropriate graces. She merited her motherhood *de congruo* and, after her consent, merited it *de digno*, a special kind of congruous merit. He seems *almost*, not literally, to say she merited, though not condignly, the In-

<sup>473</sup> Jelly, “Concrete meaning,” p. 38.

<sup>474</sup> J. Macquarrie, *Mary for all Christians* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., pp. 71f.

carnation itself. Basically, he is in agreement with St. Thomas on most points. There seem to be secondary disagreements. Part of the difference may be the warmth of Bonaventure's rhetoric.

As to preparation in body, the two Doctors agree on the virginity *ante partum*. Also on the virginity *in partu* and *post partum*. St. Bonaventure holds an earlier, more absolute vow of virginity and a more absolute, less conditional matrimonial consent. St. Thomas said Mary did not sin, St. Bonaventure, that she could not, at least after conceiving Christ. Both denied the Immaculate Conception, as did Continentals in general.

## Chapter Two: Mary is Mother of God by her consent

It was her full  
 "Yes, I will"  
 to the angel –  
 not a tepid  
 "Perhaps, I'll see" –  
 that brought about  
 man's mortal image  
 in the Godhead,  
 One-in-Three,  
 which revealed the  
 Mind of the Father  
 in the Spoken Word –  
 the Son – and tempted  
 Their Sacred Spirit  
 to come run through  
 the alley of ages  
 in search of the  
 lost lowly one.

And again and again  
 He finds her in  
 each soul who,  
 trembling with joy,  
 re-echoes, "I will,  
 I'll stand on the  
 hill near the tree;  
 I'll suffer to see  
 Him hunger and thirst  
 till His yearning  
 soul breaks free."  
 ...touches me –  
 gathers me to my  
 brothers asleep in her  
 womb till the Waters  
 of birth tear from the  
 earth her children at  
 rest in the tomb,  
 and Life everlasting  
 showers the earth and  
 man in Christ's Image  
 emerges to BE, bursts  
 forth to SEE, the light  
 of the eternal Sun<sup>475</sup>

<sup>475</sup> Sister M. Angela Sassak, O.S.F., in S. Wroblewski, *Bonaventurian theology of prayer* (Pulaski, Wis.: Franciscan Publishers, 1967), pp. 43f.

The consent which Our Lady gave to God through his announcing archangel was only one example of her habitual hearing and obeying the word of God. We see this in the story of the true kinsmen of Jesus, who hear and keep the word of God.<sup>476</sup>

St. Luke makes some striking modifications in the true kinsmen story; he tells the anecdote in such a way that the Mother of Jesus appears as the perfect example of hearing the word of God and keeping it. "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and act upon it (Luke 8: 21)".

St. Luke has made the incident of the true kinsmen the conclusion of a series of teachings of Jesus about hearing the word of God: the parable of the sower, the parable of the lamp, and then the story of the coming of the mother and the brethren. The Virgin Mary is the "blessed" one before all others, the woman of noble and generous heart who heard the word and took it to herself, and yielded the great harvest through her perseverance, through her love and faith, above all through her union with Christ. When St. Mark and St. Matthew wind up the story of the true kinsmen, they report Jesus as saying, "Whoever does the will of my Father..." St. Luke has Jesus say rather, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and act upon it." For St. Luke the Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus, is the outstanding example of openness to the word of God, or receptivity to God's grace.<sup>477</sup>

And Raymond E. Brown writes of Luke and Mary: "Luke has developed a major interest in Mary as the first disciple who heard the word of God and did it (1:38); she was present at the beginning of the Gospel and at the beginning of the Church (Acts 1: 14)."<sup>478</sup>

Pope Paul VI also praises Our Lady for hearing the word of God and acting upon it and says, "She is worthy of imitation because she was the first and most perfect of Christ's disciples."<sup>479</sup> He tells us, of the true kinsmen story, that it is "lively praise of Mary," adding, as a good pastor, "...It is also an admonition to us to live our lives in accordance with God's commandments."<sup>480</sup>

Fr. Carroll adds: "As St. Luke depicts Mary of Nazareth, virgin Mother of Jesus, she is the great gospel woman of faith, blessed because of her faith, in the infancy chapters even as in the public life incidents."<sup>481</sup>

Fr. F. M. Jelly, O.P. points out the importance of the Annunciation:

<sup>476</sup> Mk. 3: 31-35, Mt. 12: 46-50, Lk. 8: 19-21.

<sup>477</sup> E. Carroll, *Understanding the mother of Jesus*, p. 15.

<sup>478</sup> R. Brown, *The Catholic Mind*, June 1977; cited in E. Carroll, *Understanding the mother of Jesus*, pp. 15f.

<sup>479</sup> Pope Paul VI, *Marialis Cultus; Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary* (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1974), no. 35.

<sup>480</sup> Ibid., no. 39; cf. E. Carroll, *Understanding the mother of Jesus*, p. 16.

<sup>481</sup> E. Carroll, *Understanding the mother of Jesus*, p. 17.

St. Luke's account of the angel Gabriel's message to Mary is the central revelation concerning Our Lady in the New Testament.<sup>482</sup> He artistically draws the scene against an Old Testament background of heavenly messages delivered to Hagar (cf. Gen. 16:7-15), to the wife of Manoah (cf. Judges 13:3-20), and to Gideon (cf. Judges 6:14-24). All exhibit the following similarities. God takes the initiative in the communication; difficulties arise in the course of the exchange; and the message is received with sufficient understanding before the episode ends.<sup>483</sup>

"Sufficient understanding" does not mean total understanding, with no puzzles or dark places:

"That Mary was not exempted from living by faith, with all its mystery and obscurity for the human mind, is indicated by the words of Luke after Mary and Joseph found the twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple: 'And they did not understand the saying which he spoke to them...'"<sup>484</sup>

The angelic salutation ended centuries of preparation and began the New Covenant:

The heavenly messenger greets Mary: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" (Luke 1:28). In the light of the Old Testament hopes (cf. Zeph. 3:14-17) Gabriel is inviting Mary, as the true daughter of Zion, as one who represents the best in the people of God, as one filled with longing for the Promised One, to rejoice with messianic joy. For Gabriel is announcing to her the advent of a new age, the fulfillment of the promise in the divine Messiah who will be born of her womb. She is called "full of grace" or "highly favored" because of her unique role in God's saving plan as mother of the Redeemer. She is "blessed among women" (cf. Luke 1:28) because she is so highly favored by the Lord's presence in her.<sup>485</sup>

Gabriel's greeting echoes the prophecies of Zephaniah and Zachariah about the Daughter of Zion, symbol of the whole people of Israel: "In the Hebrew bible 'Daughter of Zion' referred to the people of God, often described as a woman, the bride of God. In Christian understanding, Mary of Nazareth is the individual Daughter of Zion in whom the hope of her people have come to perfection."<sup>486</sup>

The second Vatican Council says: "After a long period of waiting the times are fulfilled in her, the exalted Daughter of Zion..."<sup>487</sup>

M.-J. Nicolas, in "Le concept intégral de la maternité divine," says parenthood must come from an informed, free assent. Parents ought not to act only

<sup>482</sup> Jelly is in agreement with St. Bonaventure on the primacy and centrality of the Annunciation to Mary and about her. Cf. Tavad *Forthbringer of God*.

<sup>483</sup> Jelly, "The Mother of Jesus," *Our Lady's Digest*, Nov.-Dec., 1976, pp. 91,92.

<sup>484</sup> Jelly, "The Mother of Jesus," p. 93.

<sup>485</sup> Jelly, "The Mother of Jesus," p. 92.

<sup>486</sup> E. Carroll, *Understanding the mother of Jesus*, p. 17. Cf. Zeph. 3: 14; Zech. 2: 14,9: 9.

<sup>487</sup> Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, no. 55; Flannery, p. 415.



according to the flesh, in an animal activity inspired by the species and placed blindly at its service. In its perfection, it is an act of the complete human person and of complete human love. Their entire persons are involved, whether they wish it or not. They ought to be aware of the new human person and his or her eternal destiny.<sup>488</sup> He even holds that, for a human, any purely animal use of the human powers of generation must be immoral.<sup>489</sup>

In the case of Mary, the spiritual act which made her maternity truly human, necessarily made it a Divine Maternity, since the child who had to be freely accepted here, was the substantially supernatural Person of the Incarnate Word.<sup>490</sup>

It is barely conceivable, according to Nicolas, that Mary might have conceived Christ without knowing or willing it, by a simple exercise of the physical laws of generation, taken in hand by the Divine Omnipotence, in a generative act which could have been purely material and animal, even though it were preserved from all corruption.

But such an Incarnation, such a Divine Maternity, would have been neither a gift nor a grace to Mary, since it would not have been given to her as a conscious, free person. Nor would it have been a gift or grace to the human race, Nicolas says. For it to be such a gift, the human race would have had to receive it as a gift and as a grace, in the person of the woman who gave it infant flesh.<sup>491</sup> We find F. Jelly in agreement. He says theologians today

...avoid the extreme of identifying the "Divine Maternity" as the central mariological principle in such a way as to make it an artificial abstraction of biological motherhood isolated from Mary's conception in holiness, virginity, and role in redemption. This interpretation does not do justice to any experience of human maternity, let alone to the motherhood of God incarnate. For to conceive and bear a child is essentially a human action and not an expression merely of the vegetative-reproductive and animal-sexual dimensions of a woman's nature. St. Thomas Aquinas, while awarding centrality to Mary's true motherhood of God, personalized the relationship most profoundly by showing that human maternity terminates in the person conceived and born of a woman. In the case of Mary's child, the person conceived in her womb and born of her flesh is the second person of the blessed Trinity, the Son of God incarnate. And so she is truly the Theotokos since the relationship of her motherhood terminates in a divine person. Along with this realistic interpretation of the mystery of Mary's divine maternity by analogy with human motherhood, the Angelic Doctor, following the footsteps of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, attributes to Mary's free consent at the Annunci-

<sup>488</sup> M.-J. Nicolas, "Le concept integral de maternité divine," *Revue Thomiste*, 42-43 (1937) 73, 75.

<sup>489</sup> Nicolas, p.74.

<sup>490</sup> Nicolas, p.83.

<sup>491</sup> Nicolas, pp.239f.

ation its proper spiritual significance, thus emphasizing the christocentric and "ecclesio-typical" aspects of her motherhood.<sup>492</sup> This approach avoids the opposite extreme of making the main marian idea that of Mary as the archetype of the Church. This does not take sufficient account of the centrality of her unique calling to be the Theotokos. Such an extreme is apparently another form of abstraction in not allowing the concrete meaning of Mary's motherhood to connote the "ecclesiotypical" emphasis.<sup>493</sup>

J. Bur, who seems to follow Nicolas very closely, says much the same, adding that Mary also assented to the soteriological aspect of the Incarnation and of Christ's life. He believes the free response of Mary had to correspond to the free will of the Word. She had to accept the task of giving birth to him as Savior, to make his intention her own, for thenceforth she could have no interests or ends but his. Vatican II's *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* says she is united to him by a close and indissoluble tie.<sup>494</sup> She did not know in advance all the details of the plan of salvation, but, in the story of St. Luke, the terms employed by the angel to announce the birth of Jesus indicate very clearly his character as Savior and the messianic nature of his mission. To say that Mary accepted the Incarnation of the Word in the name of or in the place of all humanity<sup>495</sup> is being more explicit but not saying anything else than the Fathers had said, that Mary's obedience involved the destiny of all humankind.<sup>496</sup>

Crisostomo de Pamplona holds a different opinion, emphasizing the objective dignity of the Divine Maternity over the subjective acceptance.<sup>497</sup> E. Schillebeeckx proposes a mediating solution:

Her concrete motherhood with regard to Christ, the redeeming God-man, freely accepted in faith – her fully committed divine motherhood – this is both the key to a full understanding of the marian mystery and the basic mariological principle, which is concretely identical with Mary's objectively and subjectively unique state of being redeemed.<sup>498</sup>

E. Carroll sees God as sovereign, yet respecting the free consent of Our Lady:

God accomplishes salvation independently of the normal laws of procreation, not by the will of the flesh, not by the will of man (John 1:13), yet also not without

<sup>492</sup> Aquinas, *Summa*, III, q. 30, ad 1.

<sup>493</sup> Jelly, "Concrete meaning," pp. 36, 37; cf. Aquinas, *Summa*, III, q. 35, a4.

<sup>494</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, 8, 53.

<sup>495</sup> ". . . per annunciationem expetebatur consensus Virginis loco totius humanae naturae;" Aquinas, III, 30, 1 c. ". . . through the Annunciation the consent of the Virgin was sought in place of all of human nature.

<sup>496</sup> J. Bur, "Mary's Divine Motherhood," *The Marian Era*, 9 (1969) 97-98.

<sup>497</sup> "Naturaleza de la Maternidad divina . . .," *Estudios Marianos*, 8(1949) 85-8.

<sup>498</sup> E. Schillebeeckx, *Mary, mother of the redemption* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1964), p. 106; quoted in Jelly, "Concrete meaning," p. 37.

the free consent of the Virgin Mary, willing and humble handmaid of the Lord. God shows his favor where he chooses, whether in barren Sara, the wife of Abraham of old, or elderly Elizabeth, the kinswoman of Mary, who became mother of John the Baptist in spite of Zachary's doubt, or in Mary the virgin, as Gabriel says, repeating the promise God made to Abraham, "for nothing is impossible to God (Luke 1:37 and Genesis 18:14)."<sup>499</sup>

### 1. St. Thomas on Mary's Consent

In agreement with the patristic saying that Mary conceived Christ, "*prius mente quam ventre*," St. Thomas insists that Mary accepted her motherhood knowingly and willingly. Since the mind is nearer to God than the body, it would not be right that the Wisdom of God inhabit her womb without entering her mind. It was right that her mind was instructed by the Annunciation. He cites St. Augustine's saying that Mary benefited more by receiving the faith of Christ than in conceiving the flesh of Christ and that maternal closeness would have profited her nothing if she had not borne Christ in her heart.<sup>500</sup>

Fr. Jelly underscores this teaching:

...We have the common patristic patrimony about Mary's conceiving Christ *in corde priusquam in carne* or *in mente priusquam in ventre*, that is, she bore Christ spiritually in her heart and mind even before doing so physically in the flesh and in her womb. This particularly points to the fact that the spiritual aspects of her motherhood of Christ were never separated by an artificial abstraction from the physical aspects, nor was her motherhood of the Lord divided against that of her spiritual maternity over all the faithful as the prototype of the whole Church.<sup>501</sup>

The Archimandrite Kallistos Ware agrees with St. Thomas and adds the testimony of the Orthodox tradition to the intelligence, freedom, and spiritual character of Our Lady's consent:

This insistence upon the freedom of Mary's response is clearly evident in the selection of the gospel reading at feasts in her honour ...The story of the woman in the crowd is read [the enthusiastic woman – L. Gl.]...At first sight these must appear strange words to choose for the festival of the blessed Virgin, since seemingly they imply that no special veneration is due her as Christ's mother. But Our Lord, so far from slighting her in his answer, is, in reality indicating where the true glory of her divine motherhood is to be found. The woman in the crowd referred to the physical fact. Christ directed attention to the spiritual attitude which underlay that physical fact, and without which the physical fact would not have been possible. "Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it" :

<sup>499</sup> E. Carroll, *Understanding the mother of Jesus*, p. 18.

<sup>500</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 3, q. 3, a. 1, quaestiuncula 1, sol. 1; III, 30,1 c.; St. Augustine, *De sancta virginitate*, Cap. 3; PL 40.

<sup>501</sup> F. Jelly, "Concrete meaning," pp. 34, 35.

Mary is blessed because she heard the word of God and kept it when the archangel spoke to her at the Annunciation, for if she had not first heard the word and been obedient to it, she would never have borne the Saviour in her womb or nursed him at her breast.<sup>502</sup>

Ware continues his reflection on Orthodox thought by pointing out that Our Lady's hearing and doing God's word continued through her life. St. Luke (2:19, 51) tells us she treasured up the memories of God's works and words and pondered them in her heart.<sup>503</sup>

The Angelic Doctor adds these other reasons for a free, conscious acceptance of the Divine Maternity. She could thus be a more certain witness of this mystery when she was instructed about it. Also, God loves voluntary, not forced service, so that those who obey him may gain merit from this service. Since the Blessed Virgin was chosen for a supremely excellent service of God, it was especially fitting that her consent be sought when the angel made the announcement, so that she might offer her voluntary service. She gave that consent humbly and offered herself for such service, saying, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, etc." Finally, the asking of consent showed that a kind of matrimony was taking place between the divine and the human nature. In matrimony, consent is required. It is sometimes sought through the words of messengers. Therefore it was also fitting that God, through his messenger, the angel, ask the consent of the Virgin, through whom he assumed human nature.<sup>504</sup>

Since this "marriage" involved human nature, it also involved the whole human race. The race gave consent through Our Lady. Henri Barré says:

St. Thomas, as we know, goes further, taking up again an idea glimpsed by Rupert of Deutz, that it is the whole human race, otherwise called the entire Church, which, by the voice of Mary, consents to the union of the Word with its own human nature and, consequently, with the Church, "Through the Annunciation, the consent of the Virgin in the place of all human nature is longingly awaited."<sup>505</sup>

Barré continues, in his endnote:<sup>506</sup>

<sup>502</sup> K. Ware, *The Mother of God in Orthodox theology and devotion* (Oxford, Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 1969) no.6, pp. 4-5.

<sup>503</sup> Lk 2: 19 & 51.

<sup>504</sup> Aquinas, *Sentences and Summa*, loc. cit. Wroblewski says since grace is a unitive power, "Bonaventure refers to it as wedlock (*connubium*)," p. 54.

<sup>505</sup> H. Barré, "Marie et l'Eglise du Vénérable Bède à Saint Albert le Grand," *Etudes Mariales* 9 (1951), p. 102; Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, III, q. 30, a. 1. Saint Thomas, on le sait, va plus loin, en reprenant une idée entrevue par Rupert de Deutz; c'est tout le genre humain, autrement dit l'Eglise entière qui, par la voix de Marie, consent à l'union du Verbe avec sa propre nature humaine, et donc avec l'Eglise: "pers annunciationem expectabatur consensus Virginis loco totius humanae naturae."

<sup>506</sup> Barré, "Marie et l'Eglise," Endnote 389, p. 139.

Before St. Thomas, we have indeed seen that the consent of the Virgin had a universal soteriological bearing, but not at all that it was formulated *in our name*. Albert the Great, whatever may have been said of him, does not express that idea. Maybe, in spite of everything, we may find a rough draft of it in Sermon 140 of Peter Chrysologus<sup>507</sup> or the Pseudo-Augustinian sermons CXX, 7 and CX-CIV, 3.<sup>508</sup>

Pope Paul VI seems in full agreement with St. Thomas – and St. Bonaventure – in his *Marialis cultus*:

...The modern woman, anxious to participate with decision-making power in the affairs of the community, will contemplate with intimate joy Mary who, taken into dialogue with God, gives her active and responsible consent, not to the solution of a contingent problem, but to that “event of world importance,” as the Incarnation of the Word has been rightly called.<sup>509</sup>

F. Jelly says there were two Incarnations: that of Christ in Mary and of the Holy Spirit in the words of Scripture.<sup>510</sup> The Scriptural Incarnation preceded the Incarnation of Christ and prepared Mary to consent to it. Mary’s meditation on Scripture can be seen from her canticle, the Magnificat.

## 2. S. Bonaventure on Mary’s Consent

For the Seraphic Doctor, the Annunciation and Mary’s consent to it are crucial in the process of salvation:

The angelic Annunciation had to precede the Incarnation, just as the devil’s temptation preceded the human betrayal, so that, in this way,<sup>511</sup> the order of reparation would correspond to the order of prevarication. Hence, as the devil tempted a woman to bring her into doubt, and through doubt to consent, and through consent to the Fall; so the angel announced to the Virgin that by this Annunciation she would be brought to faith, and by faith to consent, and by consent to the conception of the Son of God through the Holy Spirit.<sup>512</sup>

<sup>507</sup> P. Chrysologus, “Sermon 140,” PL 52, p. 576a. Avant St. Thomas, on a bien vu que le consentement de la Vierge avait une porte sotériologique universelle, mais non point qu’il soit formulée en notre nom. Albert le Grand, quoi qu’on en ait dit, n’exprime pas cette idée. Peut-être en trouve-t-on malgré tout une ébauche dans le sermon 140 de Pierre Chrysologue

<sup>508</sup> Pseudo-augustine, “Sermons,” PL 39, 1986 and 2105. ...ou les sermons Pseudo-augustinienues CXX, 7 et CX-CIV, 3.

<sup>509</sup> Pope Paul VI, *Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary (Marialis Cultus)* (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1974), n.37, pp. 33,34.

<sup>510</sup> Audiotape: *Mary and the Holy Spirit*. N.Y.: Alba House, 1992.

<sup>511</sup> From here on, Tavad’s translation: *Forthbringer*, p. 8.

<sup>512</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 2, dub. 4. ...Incarnationem debuit praecedere angelica annuntiatio, sicut hominis praevaricationem praecessit diabolica tentatio, ut sic ordo reparationis correspondeat ordini praevaricationis. Unde sicut diabolus tentavit mulierem, ut eam pertraheret ad dubitationem, et per dubitationem pertraheret ad consensum, et per consensum ad lapsum;

Commenting on this correspondence of the order of reparation to the order of prevarication, Tavard says: "Bonaventure understands the Annunciation on the general model of recapitulation, even if the word does not appear in his explanations. It was proper, as he says after St. Bernard and earlier, after St. Irenaeus, that 'the reparation correspond to the fall.'<sup>513</sup> Details of this correspondence include the Annunciation's taking place in the sixth month, March, paralleling the month of the creation of the world and several other biblical sixes, e.g. humankind's creation on the sixth day and Christ's suffering on the sixth hour of the sixth day.<sup>514</sup>

Tavard tells us the Annunciation is the focal point at which three dimensions of Bonaventure's Christology come together for Our Lady: first, the Uncreated Word, whom she receives, second, the Incarnate Word, whom she brings forth, third, the Inspired Word present to the faithful and all of the human race, through the Holy Spirit. At the Annunciation, all three become one. It was by the over-shadowing of the Holy Spirit (the Inspired Word<sup>515</sup>) that Mary received the Uncreated Word in order that she might conceive him as the Incarnate Word.<sup>516</sup>

Tavard says, "The Annunciation is of course the fundamental episode in the New Testament account of the Mother of the Lord."<sup>517</sup> Philippe agrees with him.<sup>518</sup> And he feels the Seraphic Doctor agrees with him. "The corresponding [four – L. Gl.] Mariologies [of Bonaventure – L. Gl.] are profoundly one at the core: they all turn around reflection on the central event of Mary's life, the Annunciation."<sup>519</sup>

According to Tavard:

A theological synthesis hinges around a central principle that has been carefully chosen. It was precisely around the Annunciation that Bonaventure built his first theological synthesis on Mary. One finds it in the *Breviloquium*, part 4, chapter 3. At the level of the mode [of the Incarnation, L. Gl.] the Virgin Mary is brought into the discussion.... Mary properly belongs within the mystery of the Incarnation, being essentially related to its mode.<sup>520</sup>

sic Angelus nuntiavit Virgini, ut nuntiando excitaret ad fidem, et per fidem ad consensum, et per consensum ad concipiendum Dei Filium per Spiritum Sanctum.

<sup>513</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 61.

<sup>514</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 61.

<sup>515</sup> Tavard prefers "In-Spirited Word." *Forthbringer*, p. 46.

<sup>516</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 46f.

<sup>517</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 7.

<sup>518</sup> "... Jesus led Mary to understand the meaning of the universe. . . . He made her understand the central and unique place of the Annunciation in it." Philippe, T., *Mystical Rose* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 1995), p. 154.

<sup>519</sup> Scholastic, scriptural, homiletic, spiritual. *Forthbringer*, p. 185.

<sup>520</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 47-49.

The *Seraphic* Doctor says:

Concerning the mode of the Incarnation one must hold that, when the angel announced to the most Blessed Virgin Mary that the mystery of the Incarnation would be fulfilled in her, the Virgin believed, desired, and consented; the Holy Spirit came into her to sanctify and fecund her, and by his power "the Virgin conceived the Son of God, whom a Virgin begat and after begetting she remained a Virgin."<sup>521</sup> However, she conceived not only flesh but also flesh that was animated and united to the Word, subject to no sin, but entirely holy and immaculate, by reason of which she is said to be Mother of God and is the most sweet Virgin Mary.<sup>522</sup>

Now that we have seen this statement of Mary's place in the mode of the Incarnation, Tavard tells us, "It remains to understand it, in the Bonaventurian sense of the word." For the Saint, to understand a doctrine is to put it into context and show its relations to other doctrines of faith, to Holy Scripture, to Tradition, and to devotion, theological reasoning and spiritual esthetics. The Seraphic Doctor, placing the mode of the Incarnation into context, tells us, "The Incarnation ...heals in a mode that is most congruous, most universal and most complete."<sup>523</sup> He continues, "It befits his wisdom to work congruously, his generosity, to work universally, and his power to work completely."<sup>524</sup> The congruity of the work is based on the principle of recapitulation.<sup>525</sup> In the words of the Saint:

Since humankind fell by diabolical suggestion, by the consent of a deceived woman, and by the libidinous generation which transmits original sin to offspring, it was opportune that, on the contrary, there would be here [at the Annunciation – Tavard] a good angel inciting to good, and Virgin believing and consenting to the suggested good, and the love of the Holy Spirit sanctifying and fecundating her for an immaculate offspring (*conceptum*) so that in this way, "contraries be healed by contraries."<sup>526</sup>

Tavard says, "Thus, congruity, the first aspect of the mode of the Incarnation, shows divine wisdom at work."<sup>527</sup>

The universality of the Incarnation is seen in its involving angels and both sexes of humanity. The Fall had involved all these and had involved all humanity in sin. A sizable number of angels had already fallen. God's restoration had

<sup>521</sup> Bonaventure puts the last sentence in quotes but gives no reference.

<sup>522</sup> Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, p. 4, cap. 3; V, 243; in Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 49.

<sup>523</sup> Bonaventure, *loc. cit.*, in Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 49.

<sup>524</sup> Bonaventure, *loc. cit.*

<sup>525</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 50.

<sup>526</sup> Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, p. 4, cap. 3; V, 243, in Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 50.

<sup>527</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 50.

to be universal in scope. And so it included the angel Gabriel, the Virgin Mary, and the Divine Word.<sup>528</sup>

"Universality" implies "hierarchy," for this pseudo-Dionysian concept is important in the Seraphic Doctor's view of the universe, designating, for him, an analogical correspondence and a scale of dignity among the Holy Trinity, the Church Triumphant in heaven, and the Church Militant on earth.<sup>529</sup>

When looked at by St. Bonaventure in this hierarchic perspective, the Annunciation shows a convergence of the "threefold hierarchy: divine, angelic, and human." To those who understand it, it reveals "the Trinity of God," and the universality of the good [obtained through the Annunciation], and the liberality of the supreme healer. The common language of Christians speaks of the Holy Spirit as the active divine principle in the Annunciation. Bonaventure at this point introduces the theology of "appropriations," derived from St. Augustine: since the works of God are performed by all three Persons in virtue of their common nature, the customary language which attributes some actions to each Person is only a manner of speaking, an appropriation, even though it is grounded in biblical and traditional imagery. "Since liberality and the sanctification of the Virgin in which the conception of the Word was effected are appropriated to the Holy Spirit, it follows that, while the action was done by the entire Trinity, it is said by appropriation that the Virgin conceived from the Holy Spirit."<sup>530</sup>

In other words, the universal character of the Annunciation extends to the Virgin's union with God. Through the divine message and her *fiat*, she was united to the action of the Holy Spirit, which was that of the whole Trinity.<sup>531</sup>

#### RECAPITULATION

The Seraphic Doctor held that God would be more glorified and the greatness of Christ's Redemption more clearly seen if the work of salvation followed the same path as that of destruction, a pattern St. Irenaeus first called "recapitulation."<sup>532</sup> As Eve, by consenting to a fallen angel, was the cause of the destruction of the whole human race, so Mary, consenting to the message of the good angel, became the cause of our salvation. (See above, Mary's merits, under the heading "predestination.") Vatican II said: "Through her faith and obedience, she gave birth on earth to the very Son of the Father, not through the knowledge of man but by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, in the manner

<sup>528</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 51.

<sup>529</sup> Further discussion of "hierarchy" in St. Bonaventure in Part Two, Chap. 4.

<sup>530</sup> Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, Part 4, c. 3; V, 243. Cf. *In III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 1, q. 1; III, 98-100.

<sup>531</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 52.

<sup>532</sup> R. Laurentin says the depth of St. Irenaeus' treatment of recapitulation has never been equalled. S.v. "Marie," *Encyclopedia Cattolicisme*.



of a new Eve who placed her faith, not in the serpent of old but in God's messenger without wavering in doubt."<sup>533</sup>

The Bishops of the United States, in their pastoral, *Behold Your Mother; Woman of Faith*,

After the Scriptures, the oldest consideration of the Virgin Mary by Christian writers is that she is the "new Eve." St. Justin (d. 165) contrasts Mary with the first Eve, and St. Irenaeus (d. ca. 202) develops this much further. In writing of the recapitulation of all things in Christ, the new Adam, Irenaeus says:

If the former, Eve, did disobey God, yet the latter, Mary, was persuaded to be obedient to God in order that the Virgin Mary might become the advocate of the virgin Eve. And thus, as the human race fell into bondage to death by means of a virgin, so it is rescued by a virgin, a virgin's disobedience having been balanced in the scale by virginal obedience.<sup>534</sup>

The early comparisons were between the disobedient Eve and the obedient new Eve. Eve believed the word of deceit, the new Eve heeded Gabriel's message. A woman helped introduce death; Mary became the "cause of salvation" and "advocate of Eve." By St. Jerome's time (d. 420) it was common to hear: "death through Eve, life through Mary."<sup>535</sup>

Besides, the reparation, just like the Fall, was to come about through the cooperation of both sexes, with the woman beginning and the man completing it:

Just as the Fall ...was first begun in the woman and consummated in the man, so ...in the reparation [it was right] that the woman, by believing and conceiving, begin to overcome the devil in secret, so that afterward her Son might publicly overcome him in a duel, viz., on the gibbet of the cross.<sup>536</sup>

Tavard points out that, without mentioning St. Irenaeus' name, the Seraphic Doctor is using Irenaeus' doctrine of "recapitulation:"

...Bonaventure argues, without using the term, from a notion which derives from the *Epistle to the Ephesians*, 1:10, as interpreted theologically by St. Irenaeus before the end of the second century, namely, recapitulation. To recapitulate something is to restore it and put it in new key by giving a new orientation or meaning to past events that are now relived in a fresh way. For Irenaeus, this new way reverses the old, thus changing the course of history. The events in question are those of the temptation of Eve by the evil angel in the garden of Eden, contrasted with the good angel's message to Mary.<sup>537</sup>

<sup>533</sup> *Vatican II, Lumen gentium*, n. 63; Flannery, p. 420; Cf. Jelly, "Concrete meaning," p. 34.

<sup>534</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses*, lib. 5, chap. 19, n. 1; PG 7, col 1175; in National Council of Catholic Bishops, *Behold Your Mother: Woman of Faith* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1973), pp. 15, 16; n. 40.

<sup>535</sup> St. Jerome, *Epist.*, 22, 21; in Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, n. 56, Flannery, p. 416; Bishops, *Behold mother*, n. 41, p. 16.

<sup>536</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 12, a. 3, q. 2, c.; III, 272b.

<sup>537</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.8.

Because Our Lady cooperated in the Incarnation,<sup>538</sup> the Franciscan Master calls her the New Eve, who "crushed our adversary and set us free from him,"<sup>539</sup> "repaired our salvation," which the old Eve destroyed.<sup>540</sup>

Tavard says the ancient theme of Christian theology, recapitulation, is "definitely woven into *Collatio VI* [de Donis Spiritus Sancti]"<sup>541</sup> Eve, having transgressed God's mandate, destroyed the gift that God had prepared for our salvation; but the Wise Woman built the house and repaired our salvation."<sup>542</sup> "That woman, namely, Eve, expelled us from paradise and sold us; this one brought us back and bought us."<sup>543</sup> "...The very strong woman, the uncorrupted Virgin, most obedient and most strong."<sup>544</sup> "She offered that price as a woman strong and holy."<sup>545</sup>

According to Father Tavard, "Following rather closely St. Irenaeus, who had developed the theme, Bonaventure sees a contrasting parallel between the shaping of Eve from Adam and that of the Church from Christ."<sup>546</sup> This typology touches the Church because Our Lady and the Church are, in reality, one and the same mystery, seen from different sides. Also because the sleep of Adam was a type of the death of Christ.

And why did he take one of his ribs while he was sleeping? Could not he do it while he was awake? This is a mystery. Was not the Church formed from the side of Christ as Christ fell asleep on the cross? And from his side there poured out blood and water, that is, the sacraments through which the Church is reborn. From Adam's rib Eve was formed, who copulated with him in matrimony. As man was formed from the virginal earth, so Christ from the glorious Virgin. And as from the side of the sleeping Adam the woman was formed, so the Church from Christ hanging from the cross. And as from Adam and Eve, Abel and his succes-

<sup>538</sup> apparent from context: Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V., sermo 4*; IX, 713b; cf. *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, c.: III, 115b & *De donis Spiritus sancti*, coll. 6, n.7; V, 484b-5a.

<sup>539</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V., sermo 4*; IX, 713b.

<sup>540</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de donis Spiritus sancti*, coll. 6, n. 7; V 485a.

<sup>541</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.173.

<sup>542</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 7; V, p. 484. "Eva, transgressa mandatum Dei, destruxit domum, quam nobis praeparavit ad salutem; sed mulier sapiens aedificavit domum et reparavit salutem nostram." Transl., Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 173f.

<sup>543</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 14; V, p.486. "Illa mulier, scilicet Eva, nos a paradiso expellit et vendit; ista nos reducit et emit." Transl., Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 174.

<sup>544</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, n. 14; V, p. 486. "...mulieris fortissimae, Virginis incorruptae, obedientissimae and amantissimae." Transl., Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 174.

<sup>545</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus sancti*, coll. 6, n. 14; V, 486b. "Protulit ergo pretium illud ut mulier fortis et sancta."

<sup>546</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 174.

sors were formed, so from Christ and the Church the whole Christian people. And as Eve is the mother of Abel and of all our race, so the Christian people have the Virgin as mother.<sup>547</sup>

Our Lady's recapitulation goes beyond Eve. "Mary also recapitulates many of the women of the Scriptures, who by their deeds or their words heralded or represented her."<sup>548</sup> These will include Judith, Esther, the mother of Samson, Mary Magdalene and the widow of the mite. Also one man, Abraham.

...Judith killed Holofernes with his own sword.... Certainly the devil made the sword with which the soul of the Virgin was pierced through: but she was healed and the devil was conquered.<sup>549</sup>

...Esther found favor with Assuerus, more than all [other] women. He put a crown on her head and made her queen. The Blessed Virgin, because of her holiness, piety, and sublimity, had a crown of [a] precious stone. Who is this stone? Certainly Christ.<sup>550</sup>

Anna was praised, because she offered Samuel; ...She offered her son for service; but the Blessed Virgin offered her son for sacrifice.<sup>551</sup>

Magdalene was the model of penitents. She broke the alabaster jar of ointment because of the love she had for Christ.... Now it is clear how the glorious Virgin brought forth that price as a strong and holy woman and paid it like a strong and loving one.<sup>552</sup>

<sup>547</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 20; V, p. 487. Et quare, eo dormiente, tulit unam de costis eius? Nonne potuit facere hoc, ipso vigilante? Hoc est mysteriale. Numquid formata est Ecclesia de latere Christi, donec Christus obdormivit in cruce? Et de latere eius refluxit *sanguis et aqua*, id est Sacramenta, per quae renascitur Ecclesia. De costa Adam formata est Eva, quae ei copulata est in coniugium. Sicut homo formatus est de terra virginea, sic Christus de Virgine gloriosa. Et sicut de latere Adae dormientis formata est mulier, ita Ecclesia de Christo in cruce pendente. Et sicut de Adam et Eva formatus est Abel et successores sui, sic de Christo et Ecclesia totus populus christianus. Et sicut Eva mater est Abel et omnium nostrum, ita populus christianus habet matrem Virginem. Transl., Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 174.

<sup>548</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 175.

<sup>549</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 23; V, p. 488. ...Judith interfecit Holofernum proprio gladio.... Certe diabolus fecit gladium, unde transfigebatur anima Virginis: et ipsa curata, est et diabolus victus.

<sup>550</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 24; V, p. 488. ...Esther invenit gratiam coram Assuero prae cunctis mulieribus, et posuit diadema in caput eius et fecit eam reginam. Beata Virgo propter suam sanctitatem, pietatem et sublimitatem habuit *coronam de lapide pretioso*. Quis est iste lapis? Certe Christus.

<sup>551</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 17; p. 486. Laudata fuit Anna, quia obtulit Samuelem; ...Ipsa obtulit filium ad serviendum; sed beata Virgo obtulit filium ad sacrificandum.

<sup>552</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 21; V, p. 488. Magdalena typum gerit poenitentium; fregit alabastrum unguenti ex pietate, quam habuit ad Christum.... Patet modo, quomodo Virgo gloriosa pretium illud protulit sicut fortis et sancta et persolvit sicut fortis et pia.

The little poor woman is praised, because she offered all she had; but this woman, viz. the glorious Virgin, loving, devoted to God, and most merciful, offered all her substance.<sup>553</sup>

Abraham, you were willing to offer your son, but you offered a ram! But the glorious Virgin offered her own Son.<sup>554</sup>

Tavard adds to this discussion that "...recapitulation implies both bringing to perfection and correcting," and, "In a sense, it is not only individual women who are recapitulated in the Virgin; it is also womanhood."<sup>555</sup> "In other women there is the pain of the flesh, in her the pain of the heart; in others the pain of corruption, in her the pain of compassion and charity."<sup>556</sup>

There is a question whether Mary, in giving consent, knew that she was co-operating in our redemption. The Seraphic Doctor says she did, that she knew her Son's future high dignity and glory and that he was to be called Jesus because he was to be our Savior:

And because the fruit of the womb with salvation follows the birth without pain, therefore [the angel, speaking to Mary] added, "You shall call his name Jesus;" because according to what is said in Acts, chapter 4: "Nor is there any other name under heaven given to men in which we are to be saved."<sup>557</sup>

The fourth star or prerogative [of the Blessed Virgin] is having ...the perfect contemplation of God and knowledge of the mystery of the Incarnation, both of which she had "in via," although not "de via": and the proof of this is that we read of no revelation made to her later. Therefore, she was not present at the Transfiguration, nor was any appearance made to her after the resurrection, because she did not need to be instructed in the faith, she was always conscious of all secrets, as was obvious in the nuptials.<sup>558</sup>

Still, to deduce from these words alone that St. Bonaventure held that Mary knew, from the time of the Annunciation, all about the Incarnation and all the mysteries related to the Redemption may be excessive. It is not clear

<sup>553</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 17; V, pp. 486f. Laudatur vidua pauperula, quia obtulit totum, quod habuit; sed haec mulier, scilicet Virgo gloriosa, misericordiosissima, pia et Deo devota obtulit totam substantiam suam.

<sup>554</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 17; V, p. 486. Abraham, voluisti offerre filium tuum, sed obtulisti arietem! Sed Virgo gloriosa filium suum obtulit.

<sup>555</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 176.

<sup>556</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 18; V, p. 487. "In aliis mulieribus est dolor corporis, in ista est dolor cordis; in aliis est dolor corruptionis, in ista est dolor compassionis et caritatis." Transl., Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 176

<sup>557</sup> Bonaventure, *Comm. Evg. Lc.*, c. 1, n. 55; VII, 24ab; cf. *De Ann. B.M.V.*, sermo 2; IX, 664a.

<sup>558</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, sermo 6; IX, 703b.

from his writings that he believed Mary knew all these things. DiFonzo, however, believes St. Bonaventure held just that.<sup>559</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor did not deny Our Lady some indirect cooperation in our redemption. Mary, in conceiving Christ, gave us "the price through which we could obtain the kingdom of heaven."<sup>560</sup> Fittingly, therefore, because of her consent to the Divine Maternity, she is called, (my translations)"Conqueror of the enemies," "Liberator of captives," and "Consoler of the wretched," since she conceived Christ, who "despoiled our enemies," "delivered us from darkness and the shadow of death," and by whose birth, the Church "is consoled in all tribulations."<sup>561</sup>

He compares Mary to the earth which, "was opened ...by faith, believing and obeying the words of the angel; and she generated the saving vine, viz., our Savior, giving us the price of eternal life."<sup>562</sup>

Through her free consent to, and cooperation with the mystery of the Incarnation, Mary became our mother, as Jesus became our brother:

The Son of God introduced human nature into ...the most holy womb [of the Blessed Virgin] so that he might espouse it to himself, and that the Creator of all might become our brother, and that the Blessed Virgin might become the mother of all saints.<sup>563</sup>

Not only is she the bodily Mother of God (but also) the spiritual mother of man; as Eve bore us all into the world, so Mary engendered us all for heaven ...Hence, it is correctly said in Luke, "Mary bore her firstborn Son,"<sup>564</sup> for, although she bore one, carnally, she bore us all spiritually.<sup>565</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor proves this from the doctrine of the Mystical Body: "Because ...the Virgin Mary conceived him who is head of all the elect and whose members, all who are saved; therefore, she had to have a very wide charity, in order to love all the elect with a maternal affection."<sup>566</sup>

Her love for us was not only affective but effective, lasting after the birth of Christ, throughout his life, especially beside the cross, and continues in heaven.<sup>567</sup>

<sup>559</sup> *op. cit.*, 49; Chietini 54, n. 62.

<sup>560</sup> Bonaventure, *De donis Spiritus sancti*, coll. 6, n. 5; V, 484a; cf. *ibid.*, n. 6 ff; V, 484b ff.

<sup>561</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 2; IX, 664b-65a.

<sup>562</sup> Bonaventure, *Vitis mystica*, c. 1, n. 2; VIII, 160ab.

<sup>563</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.V.M.*, *sermo* 4; IX, 672b.

<sup>564</sup> Lk 2:7.

<sup>565</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, *sermo* 6; IX, 706b.

<sup>566</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. Dmni.*, *sermo* 26; IX, 125a.

<sup>567</sup> Chietini, 56.

## Recapitulation and Spiritual Motherhood

It is through recapitulation, making right what Eve made wrong, that Mary became our spiritual mother. The Franciscan Master takes Jesus' words from the cross, "Behold thy son," as referring to himself, Jesus, and inviting Mary to agree to his self-sacrifice. The words, "Behold thy mother," is addressed to John and merely provides for Mary's care, not making her the spiritual mother of all Christians. But, Bonaventure says, as Eve is the mother of Abel and all of us, so Mary is mother of the Christian people.<sup>568</sup>

### Corollary I: The Visitation

The Visitation occurred, according to St. Luke, immediately after the Annunciation and the Incarnation. Mary's song on that occasion, the *Magnificat*, shows how she felt, if not about the Incarnation of a Divine Person, at least about the arrival of the promised Savior, long-awaited by her people. St. Bonaventure says of her at that moment:

The Holy Spirit came upon her like a divine fire, inflaming her soul and sanctifying her flesh in perfect purity. But the power of the Most High overshadowed her so that she could endure such fire. By the action of that power, instantly Christ's body was formed, his soul created and, at once both were united to the divinity in the person of the Son, so that the same person was God and man, with the properties of each nature maintained. Oh, if you could feel in some way the quality and intensity of that fire sent from heaven, the refreshing coolness that accompanied it, the consolation it imparted; if you could realize the great exaltation of the Virgin Mother, the ennobling of the human race, the condescension of the divine majesty; if you could hear the Virgin singing with joy; if you could go with Our Lady into the mountainous region; if you could see the sweet embrace of the Virgin and the woman who had been sterile and hear the greeting in which the tiny servant recognized his Lord, the herald his judge and the voice his Word, then I am sure you would sing in sweet tones with the Blessed Virgin that sacred hymn: "My soul magnifies the Lord ..." and with the tiny prophet you would exult, rejoice and adore the marvelous virginal conception.<sup>569</sup>

Raniero Cantalamessa compares the Seraphic Doctor's words with these of Martin Luther on the *Magnificat* and Mary's experience of the Holy Spirit:

To understand this sacred hymn of praise well, we must remember that the blessed Virgin Mary speaks through personal experience as she was illuminated and taught by the Holy Spirit; for no one can rightly understand God and God's Word if not directly through the Holy Spirit. But to be given such a gift means

<sup>568</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no.20; V. p. 487; Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 178.

<sup>569</sup> Bonaventure, *The Tree of Life*, 1, 3, trans. E. Cousins, cited Cantalamessa, p. 178.

to experience the Spirit, to feel Him; the Holy Spirit teaches through experience, his own school as it were, outside which we learn nothing but words and gossip. Therefore, the Holy Virgin, having experienced in herself that God worked great things in her, and in spite of her humility, poverty and the contempt of others, the Holy Spirit taught her the rich art and wisdom of knowing that God is the Lord who delights in raising what is humble and putting down the mighty.<sup>570</sup>

Note that Luther, although he speaks of knowledge, mentions only a general knowledge of God's love and power, not a detailed knowledge of the plan of salvation.

The Visitation story emphasizes from the beginning Mary's faith:

St. Luke's infancy narrative praises Mary's great faith through the lips of Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist: "And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord" (Luke 1:45).<sup>571</sup>

E. Carroll develops this:

Like Jesus, Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, goes beyond the simple praise of the anonymous woman [the enthusiastic woman, Luke 11, L. Gl.], to praise Mary for the faith in which her motherhood is rooted; her words form the first beatitude in the gospels, "Blessed is she who has believed, for the things promised her by the Lord will be accomplished in her."<sup>572</sup>

Bonaventure believes that the "city of Juda, "located "in the mountain," to which Mary hastened in order to assist her kinswoman Elizabeth was Jerusalem itself. This has a certain importance in his eyes, since, when Mary entered the house and "saluted" Elizabeth, she not only brought a wish or a word of greeting, she saluted in the etymological sense of *salus*, that is, she "brought salvation" to the holy city by bringing the Savior with her.<sup>573</sup>

Some of the Fathers attributed the title "prophet" to Mary because of her "Magnificat." Cantalamessa disagrees: "Strictly speaking, Mary does not form part of the rank of prophets. A prophet speaks in God's name; Mary did not "speak" in God's name. She almost always kept silent. If she was a prophet, she was so in a new and sublime way: in the sense that she silently "offered" God's only Word, she brought it forth."

He says this is a charism, the greatest ever given a human being. St. Paul defines "charism" as, "The manifestation of the Spirit for the common good".<sup>574</sup>

<sup>570</sup> M. Luther, *The Magnificat*, Introduction, ed. Weimar, 7, 546, cited in Cantalamessa, 178.

<sup>571</sup> Jelly, "The Mother of Jesus," p. 92.

<sup>572</sup> E. Carroll, *Understanding the mother of Jesus*, p. 14; Scripture quote from New Oxford Annotated.

<sup>573</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 66.

<sup>574</sup> 1 Cor. 2:7.

...What manifestation of the Spirit was more singular than Mary's was? What manifestation of the Spirit was more for "the common good" than Mary's Divine Maternity?<sup>575</sup>...

Theology also explains a charism as a grace *gratis data* unlike the other type of action of the Holy Spirit ...which creates a new heart and charity – which is a *gratia gratum faciens*, that is, it makes us acceptable to God....

...All this, however, must not induce us to see the relation between Mary and the Holy Spirit as only objective and functional, not touching the most inward depth of the person, the feelings and emotions. Mary was not just a "place" in which God acted. God does not treat people as places but as persons, as collaborators and interlocutors. The prophet Amos said: "Surely the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secrets to his servants the prophets."<sup>576</sup> What, then, should we say of Mary?<sup>577</sup>

Cantalamessa reminds us there are dangers in the use of charisms just as in the use of natural abilities. St. Paul warns givers should give with simplicity (*aplotes: sometimes "largeness of heart"*), officials act with diligence, the merciful with cheerfulness. Mary gave the Savior to the world with perfect simplicity, no second thoughts, seeking no repayment. During Jesus' public life, she deprived herself of any maternal right over him, in order to give him to others. She had to turn to others for help to speak to him. She was not exalted by being mother of the Messiah, the position desired by every Jewish woman. She hinted at it only in praising God: "He who is mighty has done great things for me."<sup>578</sup>

Luther said of her:

The Mother of God shows such a pure spirit because in the midst of the abundance of good things, she did not become attached to them or look for her own interests. She conserves her spirit pure in the love and praise of God's goodness alone, ready, if it were God's will to be deprived of everything and be left with a poor naked and needy spirit. It is much more difficult to be moderate in wealth, great honors and power than in poverty, ignominy and weakness, as wealth, honor and, power are strongly attracted to evil. Therefore Mary's marvelously pure spirit must be celebrated all the more because although such a great honor was endowed upon her, she did not let herself be tempted but, as if unseeing, she remained on the right path and gripped on to the divine goodness alone.... She did not seek her own interests so that she could really and truthfully sing: "My spirit rejoices in God my Savior."<sup>579</sup>

Elizabeth's greeting to Mary completed the angelic greeting and completed the blessings of the holiest men and women of old. The Seraphic Doctor says

<sup>575</sup> Cantalamessa, *Mary: mirror of the church* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press: 1992) 176f.

<sup>576</sup> Amos 3:7.

<sup>577</sup> Cantalamessa, 177.

<sup>578</sup> Lk 1:49. Cantalamessa, 182f.

<sup>579</sup> Luther, *The Magnificat*, ed. Weimar 7, 558; Cantalamessa, 182ff.



Mary was blessed with all the blessings received or given by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David. Also:

The words of the twenty-fourth chapter of Ecclesiasticus were fulfilled in Mary: "In the multitude of the elect she shall have praise and among the blessed, she shall be blessed". Jahel indeed was blessed in the fifth chapter of Judges: "Blessed is Jahel among women." Ruth was blessed, in the third chapter of the Book of Ruth: "Blessed art thou by the Lord, daughter." Abigail was blessed in the first Book of Kings, chapter twenty-five: "Blessed art thou who kept me today from avenging myself with my own hand." Judith was blessed, in the thirteenth chapter: "Thou art blessed, daughter, by the most high Lord God, above all women on earth." Among these women and above these women, the Virgin Mary is blessed, because those blessings were fulfilled in her.<sup>580</sup>

In this completion of the angel's greeting by Elizabeth were the blessings of the most holy women of the Old Testament themselves completed and fulfilled: the blessings of Jahel, of Ruth, of Abigail, and of Judith, came to fruition in the Mother of the Lord.<sup>581</sup>

#### Corollary II: Mary Ratified and Deepened Her Consent at the Cross

According to St. Bonaventure, "This [the death of Christ] was purely good, since the Apostle Peter, who did not will that to happen, was called "Satan" by him who was put to death." According to this, it seems that anyone who grieves and is sad about the passion of Christ, ought to be rebuked: therefore the most Blessed Virgin sinned when she grieved, as is said in the second chapter of Luke: "Thy own soul a sword will pierce through."

...I answer: we should say that "to grieve about something" has two meanings: either the grieving one, by an absolute will of the reason, wills the contrary of what he is grieving about; and in this way no one may grieve about the passion of Christ, and Peter, because he willed the contrary by the will of reason, was rebuked. A different way of grieving over something is to be carried toward the opposite by a will of piety, but nevertheless, to will the first thing by an absolute will; in this way, it is good to sympathize and be lovingly affected concerning him, and in this way, holy men were affected. They gave great

<sup>580</sup> Bonaventure, *Commentarius in Ev. S. Lucae*, c. 1, nos. 78f; VII, p. 29. Completum est etiam in Maria illud Ecclesiastici vigesimo quarto: "In multitudine electorum habebit laudem et inter benedictos benedicetur." Benedicta quidem fuit Jahel, Iudicum quinto: "Benedicta in mulieribus Jahel." Benedicta fuit Ruth, Ruth tertio: "Benedicta es a Domino, filia." Benedicta Abigail, primi Regum vigesimo quinto: "Benedicta tu, quae prohibuisti me hodie, ne me mea manu ulciscerer." Benedicta Judith, decimo tertio: "Benedicta es tu, filia, a Domino Deo excelso prae omnibus mulieribus super terram." Inter has mulieres et super has mulieres benedicta est virgo Maria, quia illae benedictiones impletae sunt in hac.

<sup>581</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 66.

thanks to God for the passion of Christ; but still they were lovingly moved by the consideration of his sufferings. In this way also the most loving soul of the blessed Virgin felt compassion toward her most beloved Son in his suffering, as far as she could bear. But in no way ought we to doubt that her virile spirit and most constant reason also willed to hand over her Only-begotten Son for the salvation of the human race, so that his Mother might be conformed in every way to his Father. And in this, she should be praised and loved in a marvelous way, that it pleased her that her Only-begotten be offered for the salvation of the human race. And she sympathized so much that, if it were possible, she herself would have much more willingly endured all the torments her Son bore. Therefore, she is strong and loving, equally sweet and severe, austere with herself but generous with us.<sup>582</sup>

Father Tavad condenses these thoughts of St. Bonaventure into this useful summary, saying, according to the Seraphic Doctor, at the cross, the Mother of God was entirely in agreement with the Father, willing to exchange her only Son for the redemption of us all,<sup>583</sup> although:

...In an event like the Passion of her Son, Mary experienced a conflict in her will. In this she was like Christ himself in his humanity, and like the many saints who have also suffered with the sufferings of Christ. In so suffering they have experienced a tension between what Bonaventure calls an absolute will and a conditional will. The first prays that God's will be done; the second desires what is pleasing to the human nature.<sup>584</sup>

<sup>582</sup> Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 48, dub.4; I, p. 861. "Hoc bonum tantum fuit, ut Apostolus Petrus, qui id fieri nolebat, ab ipso qui occisus est, satan diceretur." Secundum hoc videtur, quod quicumque dolet et tristatur circa passionem Christi, est redarguendus: ergo pecavit beatissima Virgo, dum doluit, sicut dicitur Lucae secundo: "Tuam ipsius animam pertransibat gladius."... Respondeo: Dicendum, quod dolere de aliquo est dupliciter: aut ita quod dolens voluntate rationis absoluta velit contrarium eius, de quo dolet; et sic nulli licuit dolere de passione Christi, et Petrus, quia voluntate rationis contrarium volebat, est redargutus. Alio modo dolere de aliquo est ferri ad contrarium voluntate pietatis, tamen nihilominus hoc velle voluntate absoluta; sic bonum est condolere Christo et pie affici circa eum, et sic afficiuntur viri sancti, qui magnas gratias agunt Deo de passione Christi; sed tamen moventur pie in consideratione dolorum. Sic etiam pissima anima beatae Virginis dilectissimo Filio suo patienti, quantum sustinere poterat, compatiebatur. Nullo tamen modo est dubitandum, quin virilis eius animus et ratio constantissima vellet etiam Unigenitum tradere pro salute generis humani, ut Mater per omnia conformis esset Patri. Et in hoc miro modo debet laudari et amari, quod placuit ei, ut Unigenitus suus pro salute generis humans offeretur. Et tantum etiam compassa est, ut, si fieri posset, omnia tormenta quae Filius pertulit, ipsa multo libentius sustineret. Vere igitur fuit fortis et pia, dulcis pariter et severa, sibi parca, sed nobis largissima.

<sup>583</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 5.

<sup>584</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 27f.

### 3. Summary on Mary's Consent

With regard to Our Lady's consent, again the two Saints seem in substantial agreement. St. Bonaventure seems to believe her consent, in some way, merited the Incarnation in itself and merited it by a merit somewhat higher than ordinary congruous merit. St. Thomas says she could not merit the Incarnation itself, only that, once the Incarnation was decided, she could merit that it take place through her. And this was by ordinary merit *de congruo*. This is discussed above in the section on Mary's predestination and merit.<sup>585</sup>

The other difference is that, in some places, the Seraphic Doctor seems to say Our Lady understood all about the mysteries of the Redemption when she gave her "Fiat" to the angel. But this may be a poetic exuberance. St. Thomas seems to say nothing about such foreknowledge.

Contemporary theologians see Mary's consent very differently. Fuller believes that when Jesus' family came to seize him, in Mk 3:20-22, "because they said he had 'gone mad,'" verses 31-35 make it clear "that those from His home included Jesus' Mother." Referring to the distinction between Jesus' earthly and eschatological families, Fuller says, "Mary apparently does not yet belong to the latter, i.e., to those who responded to Jesus' message and call to become His disciples." He also suggests "That Mary and Joseph hoped that their son Jesus ...would turn out to be the national leader for whom they hoped." "The angel's word to Mary could easily be understood in a nationalistic political sense.... It may accurately reflect the hopes of Jesus' family."

At his baptism, Fuller says Jesus received a different call, to be a prophet-servant Messiah and this caused a break with his family. This breach was healed, he says, only after the cross and resurrection. And only then, "The way was now clear to see Mary as the Mother of the Messiah, Lord, and Son of God, of the incarnate Logos, and ultimately as the Theotokos."<sup>586</sup> St. Thomas never spoke of such a gradual growth in Mary's understanding. Much less, St. Bonaventure.

<sup>585</sup> 17-19, 21-25.

<sup>586</sup> R. Fuller, "The Quest of the Historical Mary," *Hopes and Visions: Papers of the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: 1996), 13-15.

### Chapter Three: Mary is Mother of God by Conceiving and Bearing the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity

#### 1. St. Thomas on Mary's Conceiving and Bearing Christ

##### HUMAN NATURE UNITED TO THE DIVINE PERSON

The flesh of Christ was derived from the flesh of his mother, like all human flesh, in St. Thomas' view. The reason for this is that Christ assumed human nature in order to purge it from corruption. But that nature did not need purification except insofar as it was infected by its descent from Adam. Therefore it was fitting that he take flesh that was derived from Adam, so that the nature itself be cured by his assuming it.<sup>587</sup> And the flesh derived from Adam, he derived from his mother. He would not be said to be made from her or to be born of her, if he only passed through her as a channel, taking nothing from her. Therefore, he took his body from her.<sup>588</sup> (Hilda Graef uses this truth against the virginity of Mary in the act of childbirth. This may be a misunderstanding of what the Catholic Tradition teaches and a relative *overemphasis* on the true origin *from*, or *out of* Mary together with an *underemphasis* on the Tradition's belief in her perpetual virginity.)

Mary supplied to Christ what other mothers supply to their sons, the matter out of which his body was formed. Citing Aristotle, Thomas asserts that this is the blood of the mother, not any kind of blood but blood brought to a fuller preparation by the generative power of the mother, so that it be matter apt for conception.<sup>589</sup> This biology is, of course, no longer accepted. The important principle is that Mary did for Christ exactly what all mothers do for their children.

As it pertained to the natural mode of his generation that his mother supply the matter that all mothers supply, so it pertained to the supernatural mode of his generation that the active principle of that generation was the divine supernatural power.<sup>590</sup> That is, the creative power of God supplied whatever the human male ordinarily brings about. The whole Trinity caused the conception of Christ's body but it is attributed to the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is the love of the Father and the Son. And the Incarnation is a work of God's love.<sup>591</sup>

<sup>587</sup> Aquinas, III, q. 31, a. 1, c.

<sup>588</sup> Aquinas, *Contra Gentes*, IV, c. 30.

<sup>589</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1, c.; III, 31, 5, c.

<sup>590</sup> Aquinas, *Summa*, loc. cit.

<sup>591</sup> Aquinas, III, 32, 1, c.

Jesus is the Son of the Father, not of the Holy Spirit. He was conceived of the Virgin Mary, who provided the matter in likeness of species, that is, the matter she provided made his body human, like hers. Therefore, she is called his mother. Christ, as man, was conceived by the Holy Spirit as from an active principle, but not according to likeness of species,— his human nature is not like the Holy Spirit's (divine) nature -- as an ordinary man is generated by his father, and, thus, Christ is not called the Son of the Holy Spirit.

St. Bonaventure will be a little more indulgent in the matter of calling Christ the Son of the Holy Spirit or the Son of the whole Trinity. In the end, he disapproves of it, but far less vehemently than St. Thomas.

This mode of generation does not derogate from the full and natural humanity of Christ, although he was generated otherwise than other men. Therefore Jesus, without a human father is still fully, truly human.

Neither however does this manner of generation derogate from the true and natural humanity of Christ, although he was generated otherwise than other humans. For it is manifest that, since the divine power is infinite, as was proven above; and through it all causes receive the power of producing an effect: any effect whatever, through whatever cause it is produced, can be produced by God, in the same species and nature, without the help of that cause. Therefore, just as the natural power which is in human seed produces a true man, having human species and nature, so the divine power, which gave this potency to the seed, can, without the strength of the seed, produce the effect of its power, constituting a true human, having species and nature.<sup>592</sup>

There is nothing in St. Thomas about Mary's having a power to unite Christ's human nature with the divine nature. This power is insisted on by Crisostomo de Pamplona and J. Chiodini. For one person to beget another, the first must not only produce a nature like his own but communicate his own nature to the second person. In ordinary generations, the person of the child begins to exist by virtue of the generative action. But in the generation of the Word by Mary, the Person engendered was divine, was pre-existent, subsisting in the Divine Nature. Then, at a moment in time, the Person began to subsist

<sup>592</sup> Aquinas, *Contra Gent.*, IV, cap. 45. Neque tamen hic generationis modus verae et naturali humanitati Christi derogat, licet aliter quam alii homines generatus sit. Manifestum est enim, cum virtus divina infinita sit, ut supra probatum est; et per eam omnes causae virtutem producendi effectum sortiantur: quod quicumque effectus per quamcumque causam producitur, potest per Deum absque illius causae adminiculo produci eiusdem speciei et naturae. Sicut igitur virtus naturalis quae est in humano semine producit hominum verum, speciem et humanam naturam habentem; ita virtus divina, quae talem virtutem semini dedit, absque huius virtute potest effectus illius virtutis producere, constituendo verum hominem, speciem et naturam habentem.

in the human nature.<sup>593</sup> It cannot be rightly said that Peter communicates his nature to someone, if Peter forms the nature and someone else takes it and unites it to an already pre-existing supposit.<sup>594</sup> According to this opinion, it is necessary that Mary influence not only the formation of the human nature but also its union with the Word. Only thus can we say that Mary begot the Word and is truly the Mother of God.<sup>595</sup> To say Mary engendered God implies in her a power for uniting the human nature, once formed by her, with the Person of the Word.<sup>596</sup>

Fr. Crisostomo speaks of an elevation of the generative power of Mary which will give her the capacity to engender a man-God. This will enable her generative power to have an instrumental influence on the union of the human nature with the Person of the Word. Without this influence, Mary would not be the true Mother of God. This instrumental influence supposes an elevation of her generative power, of itself physically impotent to influence this union.<sup>597</sup>

Aquinas insisted that the human nature of Christ was united to the Divine Word from the very first moment of its existence, saying that otherwise it could not be said that Mary is Mother of God. Fr. Crisostomo says simultaneity is not enough. Fr. Chiodini believes Suarez was the first to indicate the insufficiency of the simultaneity theory and he finds Salmanticenses and Bittremieux in agreement.<sup>598</sup> Suarez said it was not impossible for God to assume a creature as an instrument to this union, just as in the case of other effects, for example, transubstantiation or justification.<sup>599</sup>

Suarez rejected an instrumental cooperation by Mary, because, he said, an instrumental action would not be maternal. He proposed, as the principle of a dogmatic solution, "Passions are of supposits:" the terminus of generation is the Person of the Word. This solution seems to add logical explicitness to the simultaneity theory but no physical realities, such as an elevation of the generative power.<sup>600</sup>

De Aldama says that this dispositive causality in Mary is unnecessary to save the truth of the Divine Maternity but he recommends it for explaining the

<sup>593</sup> J. Chiodini, "The Nature of the Divine Maternity," *Marian Studies*, VI (1955), p. 22.

<sup>594</sup> Chiodini, pp. 25-6.

<sup>595</sup> Chiodini, p. 28.

<sup>596</sup> Chiodini, p. 29.

<sup>597</sup> "Naturaleza de la maternidad divina y elevación de la virgen santísima al orden hipostático," *Estudios Marianos*, 8 (1949), 92.

<sup>598</sup> Chiodini, 25.

<sup>599</sup> F. Suarez, *In 3*, q. 27, disp. 1, sect. 1, n. 8. Ed. Vivés, XIX, p. 389, cited by Chiodini, p. 31.

<sup>600</sup> Cited in J. Bover, "Como conciben los Santos Padres el misterio de la divina maternidad. La virginidad, llave de la maternidad divina," *Estudios Marianos*, 8 (1949), 186.

connection which the Fathers perceive between Divine Maternity and virginal maternity. But he says this dispositive causality is better understood as an incomplete principal cause than as an instrumental cause.<sup>601</sup>

This elevation of Mary's generative powers seems to involve giving Mary the power to do something to God. Can any creature have such a power? The examples given above, of transubstantiation and justification seem to be primarily actions upon the body and blood of Christ or upon the soul of the sinner, basically created receivers ("patientes") of the action. Can God receive in himself ("pati") the action of a created cause?

Possibly such power may be a valid concept in itself, if it is better understood and presented. And it may fit later understandings of conception. But it does not seem to fit St. Thomas' thought.

It is clear that as regards the biology of generation Thomas was heavily dependent upon the massively mistaken biological speculation as found primarily in Aristotle's *De generatione animalium*. Thus Thomas knew nothing of at least half of the biological production of a human being, namely the role of the female, her egg, her chromosomes, etc. Nor did he know anything about fertilization, cell structure and cellular division.... There is little doubt that what Thomas was interested in was the *theological* aspect of human generation.<sup>602</sup>

Following Aristotle, he believed the mother's role in generation was totally passive, that if Mary did anything active in the conception of Christ, she would be his father rather than his mother, and, therefore, an active potency would either contribute to such a deplorable role-reversal or be completely useless.

...The whole active power is on the part of the male, and passivity on the part of the female.

Therefore, because it was not given to the Blessed Virgin to be the father of Christ but the mother, consequently she did not receive active potency in the conception of Christ: either she did something actively, from which it would follow that she was the father of Christ, or she did nothing actively, as some say, from which it follows that active power of this kind was conferred on her in vain....<sup>603</sup>

<sup>601</sup> J. de Aldama, "El tema de la Divina Maternidad de Maria en la investigación de los últimos decenios," *Estudios Marianos*, 11 (1951), 74.

<sup>602</sup> The medieval theologians were concerned primarily with theological considerations. "For example, the scholastics felt that it was very important to discuss 'ensoulment'; a topic not first and foremost in the minds of biologists, . . ." M. Hodges, *Thomas reject Immac. Concep.*, p. 3.

<sup>603</sup> Aquinas, III, 32, 4, c. ...Tota virtus activa sit ex parte maris, passio autem ex parte feminae.

Quia igitur Beata Virgo non hoc accepit ut esset pater Christi, sed mater, consequens est quod non acceperit potentiam activam in conceptione Christi: sive aliquid egerit, ex quo consequitur ipsam patrem fuisse Christi; sive nihil egerit, ut quidam dicunt, ex quo sequitur huiusmodi potentiam activam sibi frustra fuisse collatam

...in the conception itself of Christ, the Blessed Virgin did nothing actively, but only provided the matter. However, she did do something actively before the conception, in preparing the matter to be suitable for conception.<sup>604</sup>

Borresen points out that this matter supplied by Mary is what links Jesus to Adam and the whole human race:

The link between Adam and Christ is brought about by the matter which Mary's blood provided for the body of Christ: Christ is not a descendant of Adam by virtue of Adam's seed, *ratio seminalis*, because he was conceived without male seed. Thomas follows Augustine's statement<sup>605</sup> about the link between them, which was made by the *corpulentia substantia*, the bodily substance provided by Mary, referring explicitly to Aristotle's physiology.<sup>606</sup>

In the above citation, St. Thomas is dealing with the bodily aspects of conception rather than the beginning of the Hypostatic Union. But if Mary, like every mother, were totally passive in the formation of her child's body, then she could just as well be totally passive, without either action or active power, in the joining of the human and divine natures.

If a later -- possibly better -- understanding of conception saw it as an action by the mother, received as a "passio" by the child, then one might ask whether and how the conceptive action of Mary reaches the Person of the Word. If there is no such thing as a mother's conceptive action, the problem does not arise.

Borresen says Aristotle's belief in woman's passivity is linked to his conception of her being less than the male.

The difference in the role of father and mother corresponds to the idea that imperfection and femininity are closely linked. According to Aristotle, the male is the active principle, the female the passive principle in procreation. The procreative power of woman is less than that of the man.<sup>607</sup> This difference [inferiority of woman, L. Gl.] has as its source the seed of the father, but its production is purely accidental. The two sexes belong to the same species precisely because they proceed from identical seed, which develops more or less perfectly and become whether a boy or a girl.<sup>608</sup>

<sup>604</sup> Aquinas, III, 32, 4, c. ...in ipsa conceptione Christi, Beata Virgo nihil active operata est, sed solam materiam ministravit. Operata tamen est ante conceptionem aliquid active, praeparando materiam ut esset apta conceptui

<sup>605</sup> Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*, CSEL 28, 1, 1894), x, 20.

<sup>606</sup> K. Borresen, *Subordination and equivalence: the nature and role of woman in Augustine and Thomas Aquinas*, (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1995)pp. 194f; Aquinas, *Script. Super Sent II*, d. 30, p. 2, a. 2, ad. 1, *Script. Super Sent. III*, d. 3, p. 4, a. 2; *Sum. Theol.*, I, 119, 2 ad 4; *Sum Theol.*, III, 31, 6, ad. 1.

<sup>607</sup> Aristotle, *The generation of animals*, Loeb Classical Library, XXI. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1963, 728 a, 765 b, 766 a, b.

<sup>608</sup> Borresen, *Subordination and*, p. 193.



An important point for St. Thomas is that Mary did for her child what other mothers do for theirs and therefore she is as truly his mother as they are of their children.

A woman is called someone's mother because she conceived and bore him. Consequently, the Blessed Virgin is called the mother of God.<sup>609</sup>

...It pertained to the natural mode of generation that the matter from which his body was conceived was conformed to the matter which other women supply to the conception of their offspring.<sup>610</sup>

#### From the First Instant United to the Word

The Angelic Doctor held that the human nature of Christ had to be united, by the Divine Word, with the Divine Nature from the very first moment of its existence. "...It was important for Thomas that there was never a moment in which the Word 'dwelt in' unformed matter; the Incarnate Word was always Jesus, the man, the unique individual."<sup>611</sup>

Otherwise it could not be said that the *Word himself* was conceived and, later, born or that Mary had conceived the Divine Person and was thus truly the God-Bearer, Mother of God.

For it could be denied that the Blessed Virgin is the Mother of God only if either the humanity were subject to conception and birth before that man was Son of God, as Photinus stated: or the humanity was not assumed into the unity of the person or hypostasis of the Word of God, as Nestorius held.<sup>612</sup>

Thus it is apparent that he united the human nature to himself from the very beginning of the conception. Because, just as the humanization of the Word requires that the Word of God be born by a human birth, so that he would be a true and natural man, conformed to us in all natural things, so it requires that the Word of God be conceived by a human conception....But if the human nature to be assumed had been conceived in some state before it was united to the Word of God, that conception could not be attributed to the Word of God, so that he could be said to have been conceived by a human conception.<sup>613</sup>

<sup>609</sup> Aquinas, III, 35, 4, c. Ex hoc autem dicitur aliqua mulier alicujus mater, quod eum concepit et genuit. Unde consequens est quod Beata Virgo dicatur mater Dei.

<sup>610</sup> Aquinas, III, 31, 5, c. ...Ad naturalem modum generationis ejus pertinet quod materia de qua corpus ejus conceptum est, sit conformis materiae quam aliae feminae subministrant ad conceptionem prolis.

<sup>611</sup> M. Hodges, Thomas rejects Immac. Conc., p. 3.

<sup>612</sup> Aquinas, III, 35, 4, c. Solum enim sic negari posset Beatam Virginem esse Matrem Dei, si vel humanitas prius fuisset subjecta conceptioni et nativitati quam homo ille fuisset Filius Dei, sicut Photinus posuit: vel humanitas non fuisset assumpta in unitatem personae vel hypostasis Verbi Dei, sicut posuit Nestorius.

<sup>613</sup> Aquinas, *Contra Gentes*, IV, cap. 43. Hinc etiam apparet quod ab ipso conceptionis principio naturam humanam sibi univit. Quia sicut humanatio Dei Verbi requirit quod Verbum Dei sit natum nativitate humana, ad hoc quod sit verus homo et naturalis per omnia in naturalibus

If the human nature of Christ had been conceived before it was assumed by the Word, it would have had some hypostasis other than the hypostasis of the Word. That hypostasis would have been a man, a complete man but a mere man. In conceiving him, Our Lady would have conceived a human being, not the Word of God. His birth would have been the birth of a man, not the birth of God and Mary could not be called Theotokos, Birth-Giver of God, but the bearer of a man who, in some way, later became God. However, the Faith teaches us that the Divine Son of God was like us in all things but sin. This would include, as the Apostle says, that he was born of a woman (Gal. 4:4). The Faith also teaches that the Virgin is the Mother of God. Therefore, Thomas denies that the flesh of Christ was first conceived and afterward assumed by the Word of God.

Chiodini says morally all theologians agree on the need for simultaneity and quotes Suarez as saying that the Word of God could not properly have been called the Son of the Virgin if in the very instant of conception, the Word had not terminated the humanity in the womb of the Virgin.<sup>614</sup>

St. Thomas also holds the body of Christ was instantaneously formed and animated. In the light of the biology of that day, this would be a miraculous exception to the laws of nature. But because of the Incarnation, it is not possible either that the body was first conceived and then assumed, or that the soul was first created and then assumed, or that a whole human being was constituted out of these elements and then assumed. The body has assumptibility from the soul and the essential parts have assumptibility by reason of the complete nature of which they are the parts. Therefore, it is impossible either for the soul first to be created and assumed and afterward joined to a body or for the body to be first conceived and afterward united to the soul. It was necessary that all four of these things happen at once, the conception of the body, the creation of the soul, the conjunction of both, and the union to the Divinity.<sup>615</sup>

The formation of the body, in which conception principally consists, occurred in an instant, according to St. Thomas. This was for two reasons. First, the infinite power of the agent, the Holy Spirit, through which the body of Christ was formed. An agent can the more quickly dispose matter, the greater its power. Therefore an agent of infinite power can, in an instant, dispose matter for its due form. Second, because of the Person of the Son. It was not fitting that he assume a body, unless it was formed. But if, before complete for-

nobis conformis, ita requirit quod Dei Verbum sit conceptum conceptione humana ...Si autem natura humana assumenda prius in qualicumque statu concepta fuisset quam Verbo uniretur, illa conceptio Verbo Dei attribui non posset, ut diceretur conceptum conceptione humana.

<sup>614</sup> Chiodini, p. 22.

<sup>615</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 2, q. 2, a. 3, q. 3, resp.

mation, some time of conception had preceded, the whole conception could not be attributed to the Son of God. The conception is not attributed to the Word except by reason of the assumption. Therefore, in the first instant in which the united matter arrived at the place of generation, the body of Christ was completely formed and assumed. And through this, the Son of God himself is said to be conceived. Otherwise, we could not say this.

And, in opposition to the philosophical anthropology which St. Thomas usually held, the body had to be not only formed and animated but animated by a rational soul. For the Word of God assumed the body by means of the soul and the soul by means of the spirit, that is, the intellect. Therefore, at the first instant of the conception, the body of Christ had to be animated by a rational soul.<sup>616</sup>

In Christ, there are two natures, but since there is only one Person, there can be, according to St. Thomas' metaphysics, only one act of being, one Divine *Esse*. He says that, since in Christ there are two natures and one hypostasis, it is necessary that those things which pertain to a nature in him be two but what pertains to the hypostasis be only one. Accidental *esse*'s may be multiplied. But the *esse* which pertains to the hypostasis or person cannot be multiplied. When the human nature came into being, no new personal *esse* came into being with it, but only a new "habitude" of the *esse* of the pre-existing Person to the human nature. That Person is now said to subsist not only according to the Divine Nature but also according to the human nature.

If, therefore, since the human nature was joined to the Son of God hypostatically or personally, as was said above, and not accidentally, it follows that no new personal *esse* [or act of being: L. Gl] came to him according to the human nature, but only a new "habitude" of the pre-existing personal *esse* to the human nature; so that namely that person be now said to subsist, not only according to the divine nature, but also according to the human.<sup>617</sup>

#### Evolution: Sentences to Summa

H.-M. Manteau-Bonamy, in *Maternité divine et incarnation; Etude historique et doctrinale de Saint Thomas à nos jours*, points out a considerable difference in emphasis and perspective between St. Thomas' *Commentary on the Sentences* and his *Summa Theologica*. In the *Sentences*, he emphasizes the assumption of

<sup>616</sup> Aquinas, III, 33, 2, c.

<sup>617</sup> Aquinas, III, 17, 2, c. Sic igitur, cum humana natura coniungatur Filio Dei hypostatice vel personaliter, ut supra dictum est, et non accidentaliter, consequens est quod secundum humanam naturam non adveniat sibi novum esse personale, sed solum nova habitudo esse personalis praeexistentis ad naturam humanam: ut scilicet persona illa iam dicatur subsistere, non solum secundum naturam divinam, sed etiam humanam

the human nature by the Divine Person, a process of becoming.<sup>618</sup> In the *Summa*, he emphasizes the unity of the two natures in the Divine Person, a state of being. This difference of emphasis in the treatment of the Incarnation causes a different point of view toward the Divine Maternity.<sup>619</sup> In the *Sentences*, he emphasizes the generation of the human nature, says the Divine Maternity does not affect Mary intrinsically, and that she shares in the Divine Excellence only relatively. In the *Summa*, he emphasizes her relation to the Person of the Word, says the Divine Maternity affects her person ontologically, and that she shares really in the Divine Excellence.

In the *Commentary on the Sentences*, the Incarnation is very much a matter of generation. The assumption of the human nature extends into the Eternally Begotten, so to speak, the human nature which has not yet that concrete character of *man* by human generation. It is in union with the Word that the humanity finds its ontological perfection. But this union is established only at the end of the human generation. Theologians of the thirteenth century, and St. Thomas himself, in the *Sentences*, never cease to repeat that there is in the Incarnation an extreme fittingness in this, that it is the eternally begotten Son who assumes a nature equally begotten.<sup>620</sup> And the assumption which terminates the generation is itself terminated by the union. The order according to which our reason explains the Incarnation is: generation, assumption, union in the Person.<sup>621</sup> "Although in Christ the assumption does not precede the union in *time*, it does precede it by *nature and according to our human manner of understanding*."<sup>622</sup>

In the *Summa*, assumption and union are two different manners of expressing the mystery in its totality. The assumption implies both the *terminus a quo* and the *terminus ad quem*, that is, the whole movement by which one conceives the Word taking humanity to himself. But the union is independent of the assumption and ought to be considered, apart from the assumption, as the state of subsistence where the Word Incarnate is found. The theologian envisages the union as a basic datum. The *Sentences* and the *Summa* have, not different principles, but different perspectives.<sup>623</sup>

In the *Sentences*, we read, "Assumption is said through comparison to the terminus from which, that which is to be united, is separated or taken; but

<sup>618</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 5, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 3.

<sup>619</sup> Aquinas, *III*, 2, 8

<sup>620</sup> H. Manteau-Bonamy, H. *Maternité divine et incarnation. Etude historique et doctrinale de St. Thomas à nos jours*. Paris: Vrin, 1949, p.26; Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 1, q. 2, a. 1, ad 1; a. 2, c.

<sup>621</sup> Manteau-Bonamy, p. 42.

<sup>622</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 5, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 3, ad 3.

<sup>623</sup> Manteau-Bonamy, pp. 65-6.

*union* is said through comparison to the terminus or effect of joining. This effect is to-be-one.”<sup>624</sup> And in the *Summa*, “Assumption determines the *terminus a quo* and *ad quem*; assumption means approximately a taking from another to oneself; but union determines neither of these.”<sup>625</sup>

In the *Summa*, when beginning Question Three, St. Thomas does not say, as in the *Sentences*, simply: “It is a question of assuming flesh;” but: “We must consider the union from the side of the Person assuming”<sup>626</sup> “In the *Summa*, the Incarnation does not include in its essence in any way either the divine or the human generation.”<sup>627</sup>

Manteau-Bonamy describes a change from the *Sentences* to the *Summa*, from the analysis of the Incarnation as a generation and assumption (*in fieri*) to the analysis of it as a union (*in facto esse*). Referring to this, Fr. T. Koehler remarks that we are not far from the modern Christologies, ascending and descending.<sup>628</sup>

St. Thomas’ change from the *Sentences* to the *Summa* is a decisive move away from the Christology “from below” and treats both the Incarnation and the Divine Maternity “from above.”

### St. Thomas and Contemporary Christologies

Hans Küng described his Christology as “from below.” He said the Christology “from above” was one that took the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation as premises and then moved deductively from God, i.e. “from above,” to the man, Jesus of Nazareth. His own Christology, “from below,” begins by taking stock of modern exegetical discussions and by placing himself in the perspective of the first disciples of Jesus, then thinking his way to God, inductively and interpretatively. He said one could not combine the two approaches. “... one cannot think with methodological consistency ‘from above’ and ‘from below’ at the same time. From a methodological point of view, we have here a genuine either/or.”<sup>629</sup>

Fr. T. Koehler, speaking of the Christology in Küng’s *On being a Christian*, says he uses many words and circumlocutions to say in modern language

<sup>624</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 5, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 3.

<sup>625</sup> Aquinas, *III*, 2, 8.

<sup>626</sup> Manteau-Bonamy, 67; Aquinas, *III*, 3, introduction.

<sup>627</sup> Manteau-Bonamy, 72.

<sup>628</sup> T. Koehler, “Qui est Marie-Theotokos dans la doctrine christologique et ses difficultés actuelles?” *Etudes Mariiales*, 38 (1981), p. 31.

<sup>629</sup> Letter to Cardinal Hoeffner, Feb. 22, 1977, *The Küng dialogue*. Washington, D.C.: U. S. C. C., 1980; 114.

that Jesus is God made man in order to save us. These formulas take the risk of not expressing that faith, of stopping *en route*, or seeming to affirm only a metaphorical divinity, since they have rid themselves of pre-existence and of the Incarnation of the Son of God. And the title, "Mother of God," becomes meaningless.

And these formulas risk not speaking that faith, of stopping on route, indeed to affirm only a metaphorical divinity, since they are freed from the pre-existence, from the Incarnation of the Son of God. By this account the title Theotokos is a claim barren of meaning.<sup>630</sup>

For Küng, the title "God-bearer (Mother of God)" was the result of "a very problematic development," a development

shaped ...by a number of very varied extra-biblical factors: the cult of the Near Eastern mother divinities and also of the Celtic and Germanic goddesses ...theological rivalries ...ecclesiastico-political antagonisms ...sometimes very personal interventions by churchmen (Cyril of Alexandria's large-scale manipulation of the Council of Ephesus in 431 and his definition of 'God-bearer' before the arrival of the other, Antiochene party at the council.)<sup>631</sup>

The title "Mother of God."

"...was a new, post-biblical title, attested with certainty only in the previous century, but -- after Cyril's intervention -- taken up with great enthusiasm by the people in the city of the ancient 'Great Mother' (originally the virgin goddess, Artemis or Diana): a formula (like others of Cyril and that council) which might imply a Monophysite conception of divine sonship and incarnation, hypostasizing God (as if *God* could be born and not a man in whom as God's *son* God himself is evident to faith.<sup>632</sup>)

O'Connor considers several Christologies, more or less ascending "from below," including those of Boff, Sobrino, and Schillebeeckx' *Jesus*. He mentions the growing questioning of the dogmatic value of the *communicatio idiomatum*, of which he says Mary's role as the Mother of God may be the prime example.<sup>633</sup> D. Fernandez says in certain new Christologies, the reduction of the personal, divine being of Jesus and of his soteriological office diminishes the dignity and

<sup>630</sup> Koehler, "Marie-Theotokos, p. 33. Et ces formule risquent de ne pas dire cette foi, de rester en route, voire de n'affirmer qu'une divinité métaphorique, puisqu'elles se sont débarrassées de la préexistence, de l'incarnation du Fils de Dieu. A ce compte, le titre Theotokos est une prétention vide de sens.

<sup>631</sup> H. Küng, *On being a Christian*, Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1976, 459; T. Koehler, *loc. cit.*, 22.

<sup>632</sup> Küng, *op. cit.*, 460.

<sup>633</sup> O'Connor, *loc. cit.*, 72.

the mission of Mary. She is reduced to her function as a woman and a model of believers, which is an important role but is not her whole role.<sup>634</sup>

Fr. T. Koehler, considering St. Thomas' change from the *Sentences* to the *Summa*, from the analysis of the Incarnation as a generation and assumption (*in fieri*) to the analysis of it as a union (*in facto esse*), saw there something like a change from an ascending theology, from below, to a descending theology, from above.<sup>635</sup>

J. Alonso goes further. He quotes two places from the *Summa* in which St. Thomas sees, in the mystery of the Incarnation, the descent of the divine fullness into the human nature, rather than the advancing of the human nature, as if pre-existing, into God,<sup>636</sup> not considering there an ascent, as if of something pre-existing advancing even to the dignity of union, as Photinus had said, but rather a descent by which the perfect Word of God assumes the imperfection of our nature to himself, according to John 6:38, "I have come down from heaven."<sup>637</sup> Then Alonso concludes, "These texts appear to have been written today against those recent Christologies, with their purpose of encountering the mystery of the Incarnation 'from below'."<sup>638</sup>

In his advance from the *Sentences* to the *Summa*, St. Thomas became even more supportive of the dignity of Mary's Divine Maternity.

## 2. St. Bonaventure on Our Lady's Conceiving and Bearing Christ <sup>639</sup>

The Franciscan Master speaks of Our Lady's "cooperatio." Tavard warns us: Here, cooperation does not evoke, with Bonaventure, as it presumably would with most contemporary theologians, Mary's acceptance of the angel's message. It designates only her physical or physiological contribution to the process of the conception and gestation of Jesus.<sup>640</sup>

The physical maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Divine Maternity, is not an abstract or analogous concept, but a concrete one, including all those elements which are essentially required to constitute any woman a mother. For although

<sup>634</sup> D. Fernandez, "Maria en las Recientes Cristologias Holandesas," *Ephemerides Mariologicae*, 32 (1982), no., 1, p. 31.

<sup>635</sup> *loc. cit.*, 31.

<sup>636</sup> Aquinas, III, 34, 1, ad 1.

<sup>637</sup> Aquinas, III, 33, 3, ad 3.

<sup>638</sup> "La maternidad divina de Maria desde Efeso hasta nuestros días," *Ephemerides Mariologicae*, 31 (1981) no. 4, 374-5.

<sup>639</sup> "[Forthbringer of God] evokes exactly the aspect of the divine motherhood which is the most emphasized by Bonaventure: in her task as channel of the Incarnation, Mary brought forth to us the Word of God incarnate." Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. viii.

<sup>640</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 30.

the Blessed Virgin bore a Divine Person, nevertheless, this generation was performed according to human nature.<sup>641</sup>

"The Fathers fought, from the beginnings of the Christian religion, to establish this truth, on which the Divine Maternity rests as on a foundation and the Scholastic doctors went even beyond the Fathers."<sup>642</sup>

#### HUMAN NATURE UNITED TO THE DIVINE PERSON, ACCORDING TO ST. BONAVENTURE

Although Mary conceived Christ by carnal generation, like other mothers, she did not become the mother of a man but the Mother of God. The Seraphic Doctor vigorously defended this truth, which had been proclaimed through the ages, and spent even more time contemplating the great dignity which came to Mary through it.

"If anyone does not profess that Emmanuel is truly God and that the holy Virgin is, therefore, Mother of God (for she gave birth in the flesh to the Word of God made flesh): let him be *anathema*."<sup>643</sup> These words of St. Cyril of Alexandria establish the primary teaching of Mariology against Nestorius and clearly express the close connection of the Divine Maternity with the Incarnation. St. Bonaventure, like all defenders of the Divine Maternity, refers to this Mystery.<sup>644</sup>

Christ, born of Mary, is the very person of the Word subsisting in two natures, human and divine. Mary bore Christ only according to his human nature but "Actions and passions are of suppositis," and, in Christ, there is only one supposit, which is divine. Mary's generation must be referred to this and she must be called the Mother of God.

Act and operation are terminated only at some thing. "Some thing" does not indicate a nature but rather a hypostasis.<sup>645</sup>

The Blessed Virgin bore the Son of God.<sup>646</sup>

The Virgin Mother is the Mother of God.<sup>647</sup>

The Mother of God is said to be and is ...the Virgin Mary.<sup>648</sup>

<sup>641</sup> Chietini, p. 5.

<sup>642</sup> Chietini, p. 5.

<sup>643</sup> J. Clarkson, et al., eds. *The Church teaches* (Rockford, Ill.: Tan Books and Publishers, 1973) no. 400, p. 168.

<sup>644</sup> Chietini, p. 32.

<sup>645</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 8, a. 1, q. 2; III, p. 188; Chietini, p. 33, n. 5. *Actus et operatio non terminatur nisi ad hoc aliquid ...hoc aliquid non dicit naturam sed potius hypostasim.*

<sup>646</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 5, a. 2, q. 2, ad 4; III, p. 134. *Beata Virgo genuit Filium Dei.*

<sup>647</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, fund. 3; III, p. 115. *Virgo Mater est Mater Dei.*

<sup>648</sup> Bonaventure, *Brevil.*, p. 4, c. 3, v. 243a; Chietini, p. 33, n. 6. *Mater Dei dicitur et est ... Virgo Maria.*



This shows the Divine Maternity depends on the unity of the person of Christ. Were the hypostatic union divided in any way, the Divine Maternity would be lost.

For instance, there would be no Divine Maternity if the union of natures in Christ were restricted in time, so that they were united only after the conception by the Blessed Mother. Then she would have conceived, not God, but a human. The nature generated by the Virgin would have been completed by a human, a created personality, immediately coming upon it, unless, in the very instant in which it was a being brought forth into existence, it was assumed by a higher person, a divine person.<sup>649</sup>

To the objection that a rational soul united to a body makes a person, it must be said that it is true, when soul and flesh are not conjoined to something more worthy; for then not only is the nature itself constituted from soul and flesh but the hypostasis and person is constituted from the nature itself. But it is not so in the matter under discussion; because the soul and flesh were themselves [sibi invicem] united to the Word itself, nor did that soul exist in any instant without being united to the Word; and the hypostasis itself, in which body and soul were co-united, was eternal; and therefore [body and soul] did not constitute a person but only a nature. And therefore it does not follow that, if the Son of God assumed a soul united to a body, he assumed a person; because it was not united to the body before it was assumed, whatever be [true] of the order according to nature.<sup>650</sup> If [the Word] assumed [a human person] it either consumed it or conserved it. It is clear that it did not consume it, for the divine nature took away nothing of human nobility. If it conserved it, then, since the one assuming is not the one assumed, it remains that in Christ there are two natures and two persons, that is, human and divine [N.B. There are two persons, that is, on the *false* premise that the Word assumed a complete human person --L. Gl.]; therefore neither is God man nor is man God: thus there is no union there, and therefore no assumption. If, therefore, there is there a true assumption, it is evident that a human person was not assumed.<sup>651</sup>

It is to be said to be entirely false that a [divine] person assumed a [human] person.... The way which says that the man was a person at the time of the assumption, contradicts the truth of the assumption. For, if in the assumption he was a person and after the assumption ceased to be a person, the person was consumed in the very assumption rather than assumed; therefore it was not a true assumption but rather a consumption.<sup>652</sup>

We see from this that St. Bonaventure denies there was in the mystery of the Incarnation a consumption of a person, which, on the contrary, St. Thomas admitted, though only in an improper sense.

<sup>649</sup> Chietтини, p. 33.

<sup>650</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d.5, a.2, q.2, fund. 4 & ad 3; III, pp. 133f..

<sup>651</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, fund 4; III, p. 132; Chietтини 33-34, n. 7.

<sup>652</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, c; III, pp. 132-133; Chietтини 34, n. 7.

It seems that the Son of God assumed a person. Besides, only that which exists is consumed. But Innocent III said, in some Decretal, that the person of God consumed the person of the human. Therefore it seems the person of the human was first assumed. As to the third, it is to be said that consumption there does not imply the destruction of something which first existed: but the impeding of what otherwise could have been. For if the human nature had not been assumed by a divine person, the human nature would have had its own personality. And for this reason it is said that the person consumed the person, although improperly, because the divine person, by its union, kept the human nature from having its own personality.<sup>653</sup>

There is not an absolute contradiction between the two authorities, because St. Bonaventure denies a consumption, taken in the proper sense, while St. Thomas admits it, taken in an improper sense.<sup>654</sup> "By consumption of the personality in the already existing human nature, St. Thomas understands only this: this personality has been replaced by a higher mode of subsistence. For, in fact, it was not annihilated, since it never had a particular reality."<sup>655</sup>

Neither is there a total agreement between Sts. Thomas and Bonaventure.

If Mary had borne a complete human nature subsisting in itself, she would have conceived, not God, but a man to whom God was later united and she could be said to be the mother only of the man. The unity of the person of Christ took on supreme importance in the anti-Nestorian controversy. St. Bonaventure insisted again and again: Mary would not be the Mother of God unless the Divine Nature were united, *from the very beginning*, to the human nature of her Son.

It is entirely false that a Person assumed a person. For this can be understood in three ways ...The first way, which says that before the assumption, there was a human person, contradicts the truth of the conception. For if there was a person before he was God ["Si enim ante fuit persona quam esset Deus,..."] the Virgin Mary did not conceive God but a pure man [...hominem purum...]; which is against the Gospel.<sup>656</sup>

[The Blessed Mother] conceived not only flesh but also flesh that was animated and united to the Word, subject to no sin, but entirely holy and unstained, by reason of which the most sweet Virgin Mary is said to be and is the Mother of God.<sup>657</sup>

<sup>653</sup> Aquinas, III, 4, 2, ad 3.

<sup>654</sup> Chietini, p. 34, n.7.

<sup>655</sup> Morgott, F. *La doctrine sur la Vierge Marie ou Mariologie de saint Thomas d'Aquin*, transl. L. G. Bourquard. Paris, 1881, 59, n.2.

<sup>656</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 5, a. 2, q. 2, c.; III, pp. 132-133; Chietini, p. 34, n.8.

<sup>657</sup> Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, p. 4, c. 3; V, p. 243.

She was not the Mother of God unless God was united to the flesh which she conceived.<sup>658</sup>

There is a tendency to conclude from this that the unity of the Person of Christ indicates the simultaneous contact of the two generations, temporal and eternal. That is, in the same instant in which Mary conceived Christ according to the human nature, the Father, by constant generation, was communicating to him the Divine Nature.

The very same one who from eternity is the Son of the Father becomes in time the son of the Virgin Mother.<sup>659</sup>

The eternal generation or nativity of Christ is measured by eternity itself and the temporal nativity by time itself, so that the former has its completion in the "now" of eternity, the latter in the "now" of time.<sup>660</sup>

Thus, there is in Christ a double generation but which, because it terminates in one single Person, constitutes one single filiation.

To the objection that the Blessed Virgin generated a person, it must be answered that it is true that she bore the Son of God; but since a person is generated by reason of the nature and there are two natures in that person ...a twofold generation is fitting to him.<sup>661</sup>

To the objection that generation is terminated at a complete being, it is to be said that this is true, "per se et primum;" however, it does not follow from this that it cannot be terminated at a nature but [it does follow -- L. Gl.] that it is not terminated at a nature by means of a circumscribed hypostasis; and this is true.<sup>662</sup>

Although generation refers to the person, nevertheless, as a consequence ["per consequens"] it can also regard nature. Wherefore human nature in Christ can be said to be filiated ["filia"], because filiation properly looks to the person. And, since in Christ there is a plurality of natures and a unity of persons, therefore there can be said to be more than one generation, although there could not be said to be more than one filiation.<sup>663</sup>

On the union of the human nature to the Divine Person from the first instant of Jesus' conception, St. Bonaventure agrees with St. Thomas. His em-

<sup>658</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 2, a. 3, q. 2, c.; III, p. 936; Chietini, p. 34, n. 10. Cf. Bonaventure, *De Annunc. B.M.V.*, sermo 1; IX, p. 658.

<sup>659</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 2, a. 1, q. 2, c.; III, p. 40.

<sup>660</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 8, a. 2, q. 1, c.; III, p. 192; Cf. also *De Annunc. B.M.V.*, sermo 2; IX, p. 664; Chietini, p. 35, n. 11.

<sup>661</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 5, a. 2, q. 2, ad 4; III, p. 134.

<sup>662</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 8, a. 1, q. 3, ad 2 & 3; III, p. 189. Ad illud quod objicitur, quod generatio terminatur ad ens completum, dicendum quod verum est per se et primum; ex hoc tamen non sequitur, quod ad naturam non possit terminari, sed quod non terminatur ad naturam circumscripta hypostasi; et hoc quidem verum est.

<sup>663</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 5, a. 2, q. 2, ad 1; III, p. 194; Chietini, p. 35, n. 12.

phasis on generation is more like the Thomas of the exposition *On the Sentences* than of the *Summa theologiae*. Between the Bonaventure of the *Sentences* and the Thomas of the *Summa*, there is an appreciable difference, because, to quote Fr. Koehler once again, the Angelic Doctor, in the *Summa*, no longer analyzes the Incarnation as a generation and assumption (*in fieri*) but as a union (*in facto esse*).<sup>664</sup>

#### Mary's Cooperation: Active, Passive, Mixed?

St. Bonaventure agrees with the Angel of the Schools and all other Scholastics in saying that Mary, in conceiving Christ, did all that other mothers do for their children. But he differs from St. Thomas in explaining how. St. Thomas, with others, follows Aristotle's biology and denies Mary any activity in the conception of Christ. According to him, had Mary done anything actively in the conception of Christ, she would have been his father and not his mother.<sup>665</sup> Scotus, Biel and some others followed Galen in allowing her some activity. St. Bonaventure chose a middle way.<sup>666</sup>

St. Bonaventure takes the reality of Mary's maternity as it is explicitly contained in Scripture and universally received among theologians.<sup>667</sup> These theologians, logically, hold that Mary did everything other mothers do in conception.

Scholastic theologians of St. Bonaventure's time distinguished three moments in human conception. The first moment, called "conception of the seed," takes place in the marital act. The second moment extended from the conception of the seed to the infusion of the rational soul, which was said to take place between the fortieth and forty-sixth day in the male fetus and between the eightieth and ninetieth day in the female. It was called the "conception of the flesh." Here, conception was thought to be found formally, or in the true, full sense, for, in this phase, the fetus is fully organized and made suitable to receive the rational soul. The third phase, "the conception of the human [conceptio hominis]" begins with the infusion of the rational soul and continues until birth.<sup>668</sup>

The infusion of the rational soul is called "conception of a human (conceptio hominis)." This begins the third and final moment, longer than the pre-

<sup>664</sup> Koehler, "Marie-Theotokos," *Etudes Mariales*, 38 (1951), 31.

<sup>665</sup> Aquinas, III, q.32, a.4, c.

<sup>666</sup> Chietтини, pp. 7,8.

<sup>667</sup> Chietтини, p. 5.

<sup>668</sup> Chietтини, p. 6.

ceding and lasting until birth but of less importance, since the fetus is already organized and receives only an increase in size.<sup>669</sup>

Evidently, since Christ's conception was virginal, the first moment was lacking to him. And this was not the only exception the Scholastics allowed in relation to Christ. To explain more easily the Divine Maternity of Mary and the unity of the person in Christ, they held that the conception of the flesh occurred, in Christ, instantaneously.<sup>670</sup>

All Scholastics attribute to the Blessed Virgin some cooperation in the generation of Christ, inasmuch as they admit she provided matter suitable for conception. They also concede to her some part in the "third moment," in which she, like other mothers, provided nourishment to the fetus and built it up externally.<sup>671</sup>

But it is debated whether the Virgin Mary was active in the "conception of the flesh," which in Christ was instantaneous. Early physiologists disagreed about the part mothers play in this phase. Aristotle denied all activity to the mother. Galen allowed her some activity, although secondary and subordinate to the male. Thomas Aquinas, Albert the Great, Peter of Tarantasia, Thomists in general, and, possibly, Alexander of Hales<sup>672</sup> followed Aristotle and denied Mary any activity in the "conception of the flesh." Scotus, Biel, and others followed Galen and allowed her activity.<sup>673</sup>

This may be the opinion cited by Tavad, saying that some held Mary provided the material principle and cooperated with the Divine Spirit "in the induction of the final form" but did not cooperate in the formation of Christ's body, since this was instantaneous and required infinite power, found only in God. But the induction of the final form (also instantaneous) is a natural effect, in which Our Lady cooperated. "She effected the conception both in its beginning and in its consummation."<sup>674</sup> Tavad expands: "One should remember here that the Augustinian scholastic tradition generally held to the theory of a multitude of forms: matter receives several forms until the highest caps them all. The troubles of Thomas Aquinas during the Averroistic controversy will come in part from his denial of the plurality of forms."<sup>675</sup>

While Bonaventure followed his teachers in holding a multitude of forms, he did not accept Galen's opinion on Mary's cooperation. The opinion of Aris-

<sup>669</sup> Chietini p.6.

<sup>670</sup> Chietini, p. 7.

<sup>671</sup> Chietini, p.7, n 6.

<sup>672</sup> Chietini, p. 7.

<sup>673</sup> Chietini, p. 7.

<sup>674</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 1, conclus.; III, 111.

<sup>675</sup> *Forthbringer*, pp. 31f.

totle and St. Thomas, "material-providing" only, gave Mary too little credit. This, the teaching of Galen, "says too much."<sup>676</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor followed neither Aristotle nor Galen but chose a middle way: "Some have said the Virgin Mary cooperated only by administering the material principle, while others, that she cooperated in the induction of the ultimate form and in the preparation of the matter, though not in the whole operation. Since the first holds a minimum and the second is quite excessive, their deviations direct us into the way of truth. Therefore, they seem to have the better idea who stand in the middle, viz., holding that the Blessed Virgin had the power divinely given her through which she administered the matter to that conception, a matter which not only had the nature of matter, that is, the nature of passive potency, but also a sufficiency and power of producing offspring. However, that power of itself could arrive at a complete actuality (*ad perfectum actum*) only through a succession in time. But, since it was not proper that the body of Christ be formed successively ...the Holy Spirit by his infinite power brought that matter to complete actualization (*ad perfectum actum*). It took nothing away from the Virgin that God by his infinite power accelerated what in other women he brings gradually into existence. - There was not less power in the Virgin than in other women, indeed a much greater one, for she had the natural and supernatural power by which she could administer the matter by herself, in the same way as a woman joined to a man; thus the whole substance of Christ was from his mother. Therefore, if we wish to think and speak correctly, the Virgin was more truly the mother of Christ than other mothers of their sons. And by that power, she nurtured him in her womb for nine months.

Thus it is clear that the Virgin Mary cooperated in some way in the conception of her Son, viz. by supplying by an active potency sufficient matter, which, however was accelerated beyond her power and brought to completion by an infinite power."<sup>677</sup>

<sup>676</sup> Bonaventure, *Ibid.*

<sup>677</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d.4, a.3, q.1, c.; III, pp. 111f; Chietini, p. 9. Quidam enim dicere voluerunt, quod Virgo Maria solum cooperata fuit ministrando principium materiale. Alii vero, quod cooperata fuit in ultimae formae inductione et in materiae praeparatione, quamvis non in tota operatione....Et quoniam prima opinio parum dicit, et secunda multum excedit, suis obliquitatibus dirigunt nos in veritatis viam. Et propterea melius sentire videntur qui dicant medium, videlicet quod beata Virgo habuit virtutem sibi divinitus datam, per quam administraret materia illi conceptui, materiam inquam, quae non solum habuit rationem materiae sive potentiae passivae, sed etiam sufficientiam et virtutem ad proles productionem. Illa tamen virtus per se non poterat prodire ad perfectum actum nisi per successionem in tempore; sed quoniam non decebat, carnem Christi formari successive, ...ideo Spiritus sanctus sua infinita virtute produxit illam materiam ad actum completum. Et per hoc in nullo Virgini derogatur, si Deus sua virtute acceleravit quod in aliis mulieribus successive producit ad esse. -- Non enim fuit minor potentia in Virgine quam in alia muliere, immo multo maior, quia potentiam naturalem et supranaturalem, per quam subministrare poterat materiam ipsa sola adeo, sicut mulier viro commixta; unde tota substantia Christi fuit de matre sua. Et ideo, si recte velimus sentire et loqui, veriori modo fuit Virgo mater Christi, quam sit aliqua mater filii sui. Unde et per illam virtutem ipsum in ventre ver novem menses confovit.

We have to look at the whole of this text of St. Bonaventure and read it very carefully to see what that “middle way” is. What did he mean by “stand in the middle?” Sometimes he seems to agree with Duns Scotus, sometimes with St. Thomas.

The common opinion is that he held: “Mary, endowed with a supernatural power, actively cooperated in the instantaneous conception of Christ.” This is the judgment of De Barberiis, Bontempus, Toletus, the Quaracchi editors, Scheeben, Morgott, Janssens, Longpre, Breitung, and Eschbach. They believe this is the obvious meaning of the fourth distinction of *III Sentences*. Chietтини says, at first glance, their belief seems well founded.<sup>678</sup>

1) First, in this text, the Seraphic Doctor attributes to the Blessed Virgin the supernatural power of administering matter “which not only had the nature of matter, that is, the nature of passive potency, but also a sufficiency and power of producing offspring.”

2) DeBarberiis cites this text and q.2, c.<sup>679</sup> to justify his conclusion that Mary cooperated in the instantaneous formation of Christ’s body and in the completion of the whole work.<sup>680</sup>

3) The Seraphic Doctor, invoking the authority of St. John Damascene, contends the Blessed Virgin had not only receptive potency but also generative, that is, active power in the conception of Christ. “A mother has not only passive power in generation but also active”... Again, the Damascene says “the Holy Spirit gave the Virgin not only receptive potency but also generative;”<sup>681</sup> and ... “one is not called mother solely because of the matter, as is obvious in the formation of the woman from the side of the man.”<sup>682</sup> M. J. Scheeben also brings forth this argument from authority.<sup>683</sup>

4) Besides, the Franciscan master, to the objection that Mary could not have been active in the conception of Christ, because this was instantaneous and a created agent cannot act in an instant, replied that this reasoning shows that she did not cooperate all the way to the completion of the work but it in no way excludes all cooperation of the Blessed Virgin.<sup>684</sup>

Et sic patet, quod Virgo Maria aliquo modo in conceptione Filii cooperata, videlicet subministrando sufficientem materiam virtute activa, quae tamen supra posse suum accelerata fuit et ad complementum perducta per virtutem infinitam.

<sup>678</sup> Chietтини, p.10.

<sup>679</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.* d. 4, a. 3, q. 2.; III, p. 114.

<sup>680</sup> Chietтини, p. 11.

<sup>681</sup> Cf. St. John Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa*, l.3, c.2; PG 94, 986.

<sup>682</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a.3, , q.1, c.; III, p. 111.

<sup>683</sup> Scheeben, *Handbuch*, II, p. 926.

<sup>684</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d.4, a.3, q.1, ad 4; III, p. 111.

5) Finally, in his physiology, Bonaventure attributed some active cooperation to the female. Rejecting St. Thomas' opinion on the passivity of Mary, he says, "This opinion says too little ...for, in generation, the mother has not only passive power, but active.<sup>685</sup> If St. Bonaventure had denied the Blessed Virgin all activity in the "conception of the flesh," he would be proposing an argument against himself.

These are the reasons, Chietini says, which can be adduced to prove St. Bonaventure ascribed to Mary a supernaturally elevated power by which she actively cooperated in the "conception of the flesh" of Christ.<sup>686</sup>

But these arguments are inconclusive. The text quoted, in which it is asserted that Mary had, in the conception, the provision of matter having "sufficiency and power for the production of offspring," taken in context, shows this activity in fact only affected the bringing forth of the matter. The Seraphic Doctor immediately adds that the matter provided by Our Lady was instantaneously organized, not by the power of Mary, but by God himself. "But that power could only, of itself, arrive at complete actuality through succession in time ...therefore, the Holy Spirit, by his infinite power, brought that matter to complete actuality ... God, by his infinite power, accelerated what in other women he successively brings into existence."<sup>687</sup>

De Barberiis' commentary on the text is arbitrary and awkward. It is contradicted by the immediate context, which clearly states the supernatural power attributed to Mary is limited to the provision of matter. For Bonaventure says, "That she by herself provided what the woman joined to a man provides, was above nature."<sup>688</sup> He also said, "It is not impossible that power beyond the ordinary may have been divinely conferred on the Virgin ...but by reason of that active power we ought not to say [the flesh of Christ] was present in a "ratio seminalis," since it was brought to full actuality by a power above nature; and in relation to such a manner of operating, it was present only in obediential potency."<sup>689</sup>

St. Bonaventure understands the words of John Damascene as follows: "The words of Damascene mean the Blessed Virgin had receptive and generative power: generative because she could provide a seedbed for the body, by the power conferred on her by divine gift; receptive, because only the Word of God could, in an instant, form the assumed flesh."<sup>690</sup>

<sup>685</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d.4, a. 3, q. 1, c; III, p. 111.

<sup>686</sup> Chietini, p.12.

<sup>687</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d.4, a.3, q.1, c; III, p.112; Chietini, p. 12.

<sup>688</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q.2, c; III, p. 114.

<sup>689</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 2, ad 3; III, p. 114.

<sup>690</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 2, c; III, 112.



As for saying Mary cooperated "in some way," that means, for the Seraphic Doctor, that she provided matter suitable for conception. He had just said, "The Blessed Virgin Mary cooperated, in some way, in the conception of her Son, viz. by providing, by an active power, sufficient matter".<sup>691</sup> If the words, "providing, by an active power, sufficient matter," suggest Mary had some active role in the "conception of the flesh," Chietтини answers that active power was in no way extended by the Seraphic Doctor to the instantaneous "conception of the flesh," as is shown by these words, immediately following the text in question: "The Blessed Virgin could supply a seedbed to the body by the power conferred upon her by divine gift ...[but] only the Word of God could form the assumed flesh in an instant, and indeed that Word was received by the Virgin."<sup>692</sup>

As far as the fifth argument is concerned, St. Bonaventure did teach the activity of the mother in the "conception of the flesh," the process extending from the very beginning of life to the infusion of the rational soul. This will be made clearer below. Chietтини denies that one may deduce that the activity which the Seraphic Doctor attributes to other mothers, he also attributes to Mary. The texts which have been brought forth demonstrate that.<sup>693</sup>

Therefore, we must reject the commonly accepted solution on Bonaventure's doctrine about Mary's cooperation in generation, which holds that *he* held that she actively cooperated in the "conception of the flesh."<sup>694</sup>

Chietтини proposes this: *According to St. Bonaventure, the Blessed Virgin had the power of actively cooperating in the instantaneous conception but, in fact, only administered the matter.* This solution, he claims, flows from two principles the Franciscan doctor held about the conception of Christ, one physiological, the other metaphysical.<sup>695</sup>

Chietтини states the physiological principle first. Although the Seraphic Doctor follows, not Galen, but Aristotle, in regard to the activity of the principles of human generation, he understands it, nevertheless, in his own way, affirming that the opinion of the Stagirite, according to which the man is the active and efficient cause in generation and the woman is the passive, material cause, is not to be understood in any absolute manner but only comparatively. He says, "the material aspect is found more in the woman and the efficient or active more in the man."<sup>696</sup>

<sup>691</sup> Ibid.

<sup>692</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d.4, a.3, q.1, c; III, 112.

<sup>693</sup> Chietтини, p.14.

<sup>694</sup> Chietтини, p.14.

<sup>695</sup> Chietтини, p. 14.

<sup>696</sup> Bonaventure, *II Sent.*, d. 20,a. 1, q. 2, c.; II, p. 492. Further citations: Chietтини, p.15, n. 33.

That the activity of the mother reaches even to the "conception of the flesh," is evident from the fact that this activity completes that operation although in the case of Christ's conception, it was finished in an instant.<sup>697</sup>

The second, metaphysical principle says a finite, created agent cannot work in an instant, since this belongs exclusively to an infinite power. Chiettni proves this with many citations.<sup>698</sup> The Saint attributed an absolute value to this principle of metaphysics, making it prevail over the physiological principle, which had control only to the extent the former allowed. Relying on the physiological principle, he said, "The Blessed Virgin had the power, divinely given her, through which she supplied the matter which had the sufficiency and the power to produce offspring."<sup>699</sup> But, in virtue of the metaphysical principle, the holy Doctor denies this power of the Blessed Virgin was actually exercised and asserts that, in fact, Mary exercised no activity in the instantaneous conception but only supplied the matter.<sup>700</sup>

But that power [the active power in the matter provided by the Blessed Virgin] could, of itself, reach perfect actuality only through succession in time; but since it was not fitting that the body of Christ be formed successively ...the Holy Spirit brought that matter to complete actuality ...The Virgin Mary did cooperate in some way in the conception of the Son, viz. by supplying, by an active power, sufficient matter which was accelerated beyond her power and brought to completion through an infinite power...; Mary had the power of receiving and generating the Word: of generating because she could supply a seedbed to the body through power conferred on her by a divine gift; of receiving, because only the Word of God could form in an instant the assumed flesh.<sup>701</sup>

Chiettni considers it evident that, in St. Bonaventure's opinion, Mary indeed had the *power* actively to cooperate in the conception of the flesh of her Son. Her *actual* cooperation was passive, however, only supplying the matter. In other words, she had active power but did not use it.

After giving proof of this solution, Chiettni confirms it by examples taken from St. Bonaventure. For instance, the Seraphic Teacher says Mary was related to the instantaneous organization as the staff of Aaron was to the fruit miraculously generated from it. God conferred on the staff the power of bearing buds, flowers and almonds but he, not that power, brought forth flowers instantaneously. Bonaventure says:

<sup>697</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d.4, a. 3, q. 1., c.; III,p. 112; Chiettni, p. 15.

<sup>698</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 1, ad opp. 4; III,p. 111; *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 2, a. 3, q. 2, ad 3; III, p. 92. *Ibid.*, ad 4; III, p. 94; *ibid.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 1, c; III,p. 112. *Breviloquium*, p. 4, c. 3; V,p. 244.

<sup>699</sup> Chiettni, p.16.

<sup>700</sup> Chiettni, p.16.

<sup>701</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 1, c.; III,p. 112.

It would be similar if God were to give a dry branch the power of bearing fruit which a green one has and, beyond that, were to make it bear fruit in an instant;...<sup>702</sup>

Thus, Bonaventure started from a different principle but arrived at the same conclusion as St. Thomas: that Mary only supplied the matter. We may ask if this agreement extends to accidentals. There may be some difference between them. The Angelic Doctor says the action before the "conception of the flesh," whereby the matter for conception was separated from the rest of Mary's flesh, was performed, not by her, but by the Holy Spirit. This did not make her less of a mother, because this activity is a prelude to conception.

The matter of the conception of the flesh of Christ was separated from the rest of the flesh of the Virgin by the operation of the Holy Spirit.<sup>703</sup>..... In other women [the matter of conception] is separated by the power of the woman moved by the man ...And this does not diminish the character of mother, because this action is a preamble to conception. The matter of the conception of the flesh of Christ was separated from the rest of the flesh of the Virgin by the operation of the Holy Spirit.<sup>704</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor says it was done by her power, supernaturally elevated. There concurred simultaneously in the conception of the Son of God, the innate power, the infused power, and the uncreated power.... The infused power segregated the matter.<sup>705</sup>

However, Chiettoni admits, we cannot build a valid argument on a single, brief citation from St. Bonaventure, who refused to inquire too closely about such details in the question of how the matter was prepared by Our Lady:

It is foolish in these to wish to study individual matters so curiously. Still, it is plainly enough to say that the Virgin provided the apt matter for the generation of the Son of God according to the flesh.<sup>706</sup>

<sup>702</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.* d. 4, a. 3, q. 1, ad 1; III, p. 112; Chiettoni, p. 17. Et est simile, si Deus uni virgae aridae daret vim germinandi, quem habet una viridis, et praeter hoc, faceret ipsam in instanti fructificare; ...

<sup>703</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 4, q. 2, a. 1. Materia conceptionis carnis Christi separata est a reliqua carne Virginis operatione Spiritus sancti.

<sup>704</sup> Aquinas, *ibid.* In aliis mulieribus [materia conceptionis] separatur per virtutem mulieris motam a viro ...Nec hoc diminuit rationem matris, quia ista actio est praeambula ad conceptionem. Materia conceptionis carnis Christi separata est a reliqua Virginis carne operatione Spiritus Sancti.

<sup>705</sup> Bonaventure, *Brevil.*, p. 4, c. 3; V, 244; Chiettoni, p. 17. In conceptione Filii Dei simul concurrunt virtus innata, virtus infusa et virtus increata...Virtus infusa materiam segregavit.

<sup>706</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, ad 2; III, 112. Stultum est in talibus velle ita curiose singula pertractare. Hoc tamen sufficit dixisse, videlicet quod Virgo ministravit materiam aptam generationi Filii Dei secundum carnem.

Chiettni believes, no matter what the case is with incidentals, his basic thesis stands: according to St. Bonaventure, Mary had the potency to contribute actively to the conception of Christ but, in fact, only provided the matter.<sup>707</sup>

But, if we hold that, in the Blessed Virgin, this potency never was brought to actuality, do we not downgrade her true motherhood? Bonaventure held that, in other mothers, this potentiality came to actuality. Does not it follow that Mary had less power than they? Blessed John Duns Scotus thinks so: If a mother is an active cause, one would not be called "mother" solely because of active *power*, if it was kept from acting.<sup>708</sup> The Seraphic Doctor saw this difficulty. He asserted that, rather than less, Mary had more power than other mothers, for she, besides the power by which she provided the matter, as the feminine sex does, and by which moreover, she nourished the child externally in the last stage of conception, from the infusion of the rational soul until birth, also had the supernatural power by which she supplied all the matter of generation. Through this power she could do what no other woman ever could. Thus he concludes that motherhood is in Mary, *not* in a diminished way but in a fuller sense: "If we wish to think and speak rightly, the Virgin was mother of Christ in a truer manner than any mother of her son."<sup>709</sup>

St. Bonaventure further explained,

It was according to nature that the Virgin administer as much fluid for the conception as the female sex supplies.<sup>710</sup>

For there was not less power in the Virgin than in another woman, indeed much more, because she had the natural and supernatural power by which she could supply the matter by herself alone to the same extent as a woman joined to a man and therefore, if we wish to speak and write correctly, the Virgin was mother of Christ more truly than other mothers are of their sons. Therefore, also by that power, she nurtured him in her womb throughout the nine months.<sup>711</sup>

Chiettni comments on this:

"Per se" indeed that power of which the Holy Doctor speaks in the last proposition quoted from the text can be referred grammatically as much to a supernatural power as to a natural one: both were spoken of immediately before. But when one examines the teaching of Bonaventure diligently, it is obvious that Mary, by her natural power nurtured "him [Christ] in [her] womb throughout nine months.' Since the Seraphic One openly taught, just as all scholastic Doctors generally did,

<sup>707</sup> Chiettni, p.18.

<sup>708</sup> Scotus, *Op. Oxon.*, *III Sent.*, d. 4, q. 1; ed. Balič, 90. For concurring opinions in commentators on Scotus, see Chiettni, p.18, n. 44. "Propter solam virtutem activam, si erat praeventa ne ageret, non diceretur mater, si mater est causa agens."

<sup>709</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 1, c.; III, 112a; Chiettni, p. 20.

<sup>710</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.* d. 4, a. 3, q. 2, c.; III, 114b.

<sup>711</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q.1, c.; III, p. 112; Chiettni, p/ 19, n. 45.

that the last phase of the conception was carried out in Christ naturally, just as happens for the rest of human beings.<sup>712</sup>

In Bonaventure's words:

Conception is understood in two ways; in one way we call "conception" the operation of nature in the formation of the body up to the reception of the soul. In another way, conception, in the broad sense, means the nourishing and developing of the body up to its birth and leaving the womb. Therefore, if conception is taken in the first sense, then the conception of Christ was not like ours but above it: he was not conceived in time but in an instant. But if conception is taken in the second, broad sense, this [his] was like ours, because for nine months he was nourished and grew in [his] mother's womb, like other humans before they are born.<sup>713</sup> Because nature, in Christ, was sufficiently able to bring the body of Christ to full quantity, so that his dignity was in no way offended, therefore God did not wish to anticipate the time, so that as a just administrator of the universe, he allowed each being to operate according to the power appropriate to it. And this was fitting, because he did not wish to frustrate nature but to repair it. -- And this suggests that the supreme power ought not to deprive the inferior power of its exercise without cause.<sup>714</sup>

Chietтини repeats in the text the quote he gave in note 45: "If we wish to think and speak correctly, the Virgin was the Mother of Christ in a truer way than any mother is of her son."<sup>715</sup> It might cause us concern to hear the Seraphic Doctor say that Mary is more truly the Mother of Christ than another woman is of her son. This means she was mother in some different way. Would it be more reassuring to hear she was mother in the precisely the *same* way as other mothers, as St. Thomas says? According to the Angelic Doctor, the basis of calling Mary "Mother of Christ," indeed, "Mother of God," is that she did exactly what other mothers do for their offspring. If there is a difference, even if St. Bonaventure considers it to be more maternal, some other commentator might consider it less.

In the teaching of the Seraphic Doctor, Mary's power has less of an effect than that of other women, since it achieved only the preparation ["*praeambulum*"] of the conception of the flesh. But the lesser efficacy is made up for by a greater intensity in that she administered the whole matter of the conception. To him, this is enough that the concept of mother be preserved in Mary.

The saint has another problem to resolve. When he says Mary has a supernatural power, he opens himself to the argument that the operation of the

<sup>712</sup> Chietтини, p. 20.

<sup>713</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.* d.8 ;III,p. 197.

<sup>714</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*d. 3, p. 2, a. 3, q. 1, c. ;III,p. 91; Chietтини 19, n. 45.

<sup>715</sup> Chietтine, p. 20. "Si recte velimus sentire et loqui veriori modo fuit Virgo mater Christi quam sit aliqua mater filii sui."

natural power in conception might have been removed by the supernatural.<sup>716</sup> Chietti discusses that in this next part.

### Whether the Cooperation of Mary in the Conception of Christ Was Natural or Supernatural?

St. Bonaventure here is not asking about the nature of the Incarnation or of the human generation of Christ but only about the physical operation of Mary in her cooperation with the conception of the Lord. He says it was neither wholly natural nor entirely supernatural but partly one, partly the other. "The Virgin Mary had potency above nature and potency according to nature."<sup>717</sup> The supernatural element is found in two considerations: first, in the administration of the *whole* matter of the conception and, second, in doing this without the help of a man. It is found both in the conferring of the potency and in the actual operation.<sup>718</sup> But the supernatural factor did not eliminate all natural operation. She provided the maternal matter by her natural power and nurtured him naturally for nine months.<sup>719</sup> Thus the supernatural element in no way prejudiced the true maternity of the Virgin, the basis for Christ's sonship.

Chietti claims St. Thomas agrees with Bonaventure on this point, even though he poses the problem in a different way, for he agrees that Mary only provided the matter for the conception of Jesus and that the administration was both natural and supernatural in the way the Franciscan teacher holds. This opinion of Chietti is opposed to the doctrine of the Quaracchi editors<sup>720</sup> also to Janssens,<sup>721</sup> and to all who say Bonaventure taught Mary had some active role in the conception of Christ. Since Thomas clearly held she performed *no* activity, and they think Bonaventure taught she did, they would logically conclude to a disagreement between the Doctors.<sup>722</sup> Chietti says both great theologians hold no activity in her and he sees them in agreement.

Scotus admits a natural cooperation by the Blessed Virgin in the "conception of the flesh," thus emphasizing more the natural element in her cooperation.<sup>723</sup>

<sup>716</sup> Chietti, p. 20.

<sup>717</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 2, c.; III, p. 113; Chietti 20, n.52. "Virgo Maria potentiam habuit supra naturam et potentiam secundum naturam."

<sup>718</sup> Bonaventure, *ibid.*, q. 1 c, q. 2, c.; III, pp. 112, 114.

<sup>719</sup> Bonaventure, *ibid.*, q. 1, c.; III, p. 112; Chietti, p. 22.

<sup>720</sup> III Schol., 113.

<sup>721</sup> A. Janssens, "De glorificatione corporali B. Mariae Virginis," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 81 (1931), 437-45, p.437.

<sup>722</sup> Chietti, p. 22, n.56.

<sup>723</sup> *Op. Oxon.*, *III Sent.*, d. 4, q. 1; 106ss, ed. Ballic; Chietti, p. 22.

Thus, St. Bonaventure teaches that the Blessed Virgin's cooperation in the conception of Christ is what makes her Mother of God. This cooperation, both natural and supernatural, only amounted to the administration of matter suited to conception. In the ordinary course of nature, it would have included the organization of the fetus, the "conception of the flesh."<sup>724</sup>

In the eyes of Chiettni, this opinion places the Seraphic Doctor midway between St. Thomas and Duns Scotus. He began with Scotus's principle, that woman has an active role in conception, and arrived at Aquinas' conclusion, denying Mary any activity in the instantaneous conception. This solves the problem of Bonaventure's seeming to be inconsistent, adhering, now to the Subtle Doctor's opinion, now to that of the Angelic.<sup>725</sup>

All three were far from the truth in biological matters. Their errors, however, had no theological consequences, because they all held the dogmatic principle: Mary is a mother like all other mothers. Chiettni admits:

It is nonetheless worthy of note that the theological principle of this kind is better saved in the teaching of Scotus and Thomas than in the opinion of the Seraphic one, who, less coherently than they, notably increases the difference between Mary and other mothers.<sup>726</sup>

In a footnote, Chiettni gives the opinion of A. Breitung, S.J.<sup>727</sup>, and also that of A. Mitterer.<sup>728</sup> Chiettni summarizes their solution of the opposition between the ancient and modern physiology in three points: 1) In regard to the matter of conception, both male and female contribute something living, not something unorganized, as the ancients believed; 2) Today we believe the soul is infused into the body immediately after the "conception of the seed -- this makes it unnecessary to invoke a miracle to explain the conception of Christ; 3) We know that both male and female have an active role in generation. Chiettni then comments that St. Bonaventure and, even more, Duns Scotus, came closer to this modern view than the strict Aristotelianism of St. Thomas. Bonaventure admitted an active cooperation of ordinary mothers in the "conception of the flesh," the formation of the fetus and its preparation to receive the rational soul, although he denied this active cooperation to Mary. Scotus insisted even

<sup>724</sup> Chiettni, p. 23.

<sup>725</sup> Chiettni, p. 23.

<sup>726</sup> Chiettni, p. 23. Notatu nihilominus dignum est huiusmodi theologicum principium melius salvari in doctrina Scoti et Thomae, quam in opinione Seraphici, qui minus cohaerenter ac illi, discrimen inter Mariam et coeteras matres notabiliter auget.

<sup>727</sup> A. Breitung, "De conceptione Christi Domini inquisitio physiologico-theologica," *Gregorianum*, V(1924), 391-423, 531-68.

<sup>728</sup> A. Mitterer, "Mann und Weib nach dem biologischen Weltbild des Hl. Thomas und dem der Gegenwart," *Zeitschrift fuer katholische Theologie*, 57 (1933), pp. 491-556.

more strongly on the activity of the mother in the "conception of the flesh," and vigorously defended it also for Mary.<sup>729</sup>

### 3. *Summary on Mary's Conceiving and Bearing Christ*

The difference between our Saints lies in Mary's activity or passivity. In comparing the two Doctors on this point, St. Bonaventure allows her some active power, which he also allows to ordinary mothers. But he says she never used it. He allows slightly more than St. Thomas: active potency; but no actuation of that active potency. The Angelic Doctor seems to hold to an absolute: if she had done *anything* actively in the conception, then she would have been Christ's father and not his mother. Here, there is, not a great difference between the Holy Doctors, but a true difference.

<sup>729</sup> Scotus, *Op. Oxon.*, III Sent., d. 4, q. 1; ed. Balić. Pp. 93 ff.



## Chapter Four: Mary is Mother of God by a Permanent Relation of Motherhood to the Person of Her Son

Mary's relation to Jesus influenced her profoundly. Tavad says: "...The Word was made flesh, not of some 'eternal woman' of imagination, but of one particular Palestinian Jewish woman. In so doing, however, he enlarged the scope of her life to the universal dimension of his own mission. She became the medium of his task as Redeemer."<sup>730</sup>

She is honored with various titles, e.g. Helper, Companion, even Consort.<sup>731</sup> The title "woman," which Jesus applies to her is meaningful, recalling the "woman," Eve, of Genesis, and anticipating the "woman" of Revelation, chap. 12, the first and last books in the present arrangement of the Bible.<sup>732</sup>

### 1. St. Thomas on the Relation of Mary to Jesus

MARY'S RELATION OF MOTHERHOOD TERMINATES IN THE DIVINE PERSON, NOT IN THE HUMAN NATURE

J. Bur says: "Although Mary has not given birth to the divinity, neither has she borne a human nature without subsistence. She has borne a concrete Person, Jesus Christ, the God-Man, Mediator and Savior of all men. The motherhood of Mary is terminated in the Person of Christ as Divine Mediator and Redeemer."<sup>733</sup>

Christ is generated from Mary and is in the same species, therefore he is her Son and she, his mother, as is stated in the Gospels.<sup>734</sup> But she is not the mother of the Divine Nature, since Christ did not receive it from her.<sup>735</sup> She is called "Mother of God," not because she is mother of the divinity but because she is mother, according to the humanity, of a person having divinity and humanity.<sup>736</sup>

Mary has a real relation of motherhood to Jesus. Because of this real relation, Jesus is said to be related to her as Son, although he has no real relation of Sonship or filiation to her. The relation which he has to his mother is a men-

<sup>730</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p.110.

<sup>731</sup> M. O'Carroll, "Maria Socia, Adjutrix, Consors Christi," *De cultu mariano: saeculis XII-XV. Acta Congressus Mariologicae-Mariani Internationalis Romae 1975 celebrati. Vol. IV: De cultu mariano apud scriptores ecclesiasticos saec. XII-XIII*. Rome: Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis, 1980, p. 27

<sup>732</sup> "[T]here seems to be a variety of opinions which one was the last in the N.T. Canon." F. Jelly, letter to L. Glavin, Feb. 25, 2000.

<sup>733</sup> J. Bur, "Divine Motherhood," P. 28.

<sup>734</sup> Aquinas, *Contra Gentes*, IV, c. 32.

<sup>735</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 8, a. 3.

<sup>736</sup> Aquinas, *III*, q. 35, a. 4, ad 2.

tal relation; it exists only in our minds. Christ is born of the Father from all eternity by one nativity, of his mother on earth by a nativity which is distinct and of a different species. Thus, in a sense, there ought, were we considering natures, to be two filiations, or sonships, in Christ, one temporal and one eternal. But the subject of the filiation is only the person, not the nature. And in Christ, there is only one eternal Person. He is the eternal Son. Therefore, in him there is only one eternal Sonship.<sup>737</sup>

Every relation which is said in time of God does not place in God anything real but only mental. Therefore the filiation or Sonship by which Christ is related to his mother cannot be a real relation but only a mental one. In the same way, God is said to be really Lord, even though the relation of lordship is not real in God. But creatures are truly subject to God and have a real relation of subjection to him. So God is said to be really Lord because of the real relation of subjection in the creature, and Christ is said to be really the Son of Mary from the real relation of maternity she has to him.<sup>738</sup>

For St. Thomas, Mary is truly the Mother of Christ because she provided for him what every mother provides for her son. The body of Christ was not brought from heaven, as Valentinus said, but was taken from the Virgin Mother and formed from her most pure blood. This alone, he says, is required for the nature of motherhood. Whatever may be of necessity of generation on the part of the mother, is found in the Blessed Virgin.<sup>739</sup>

St. Thomas' detailed biology follows Aristotle. He says that in the generation of an animal, the female provides the matter but the active principle in generation is from the male, as Aristotle held.<sup>740</sup> The female provides the matter for the conception of offspring. This matter is the blood of the female, not of any sort, but brought to some more mature preparation by the generative power of the mother, so that it be apt matter for conception.<sup>741</sup>

Christ received from Mary what all offspring receive from their mothers. She was not an active principle but she provided the matter, prepared in a certain way. Without this preparation, there would be no natural potency for conception, just as there is no natural potency in wood for a bench to be made of

<sup>737</sup> Aquinas, III, 35, 5, c.

<sup>738</sup> Aquinas, III, 35, 5, c.

<sup>739</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 4, q. 2, a. 1, resp.

<sup>740</sup> Aristotle, *The generation of animals*, Book I, Chap. 19, *Loeb Classical Library*, XXI (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1963), 99. Cf. chap. 2, 20-22.

<sup>741</sup> Aristotle, *ibid.*; ". . . Materia . . . est sanguis mulieris . . . perductus ad quendam ampliorem digestionem per virtutem generativam matris . . ." Aquinas, III, 31, 5, c. ". . . The matter . . . is the blood of the woman . . . brought to a certain fuller preparation by the generative power of the mother . . . ."

it nor in the slime of the earth for a man to be formed from it. Preparation of the matter is an activity, so there must be some active potency in the mother. St. Thomas holds there is an active potency in the woman but an incomplete one. Generative power is active. This power is in the male fully, because the male power actually forms the one generated. In the woman, it is found in an incomplete manner, since the female power extends only to the preparation of the matter.<sup>742</sup>

Mary's relation of motherhood arises out of an action in the past, as many relations do. Certain relations, the Angelic Doctor tells us, arise from actions, not according as they are in act but in so far as they have been: as someone is said to be a father after the effect of the action is achieved. And such relations are founded upon that which is left in the action by the agent, whether it be a disposition or a habit or some kind of right or power or whatever it may be of this kind.<sup>743</sup>

Mary is truly called "Mother of God," not just "Mother of the Son of God," because "God" can stand for any Divine Person. Some said, in St. Thomas' time, that the Virgin could not be said to be the Mother of God, lest she be understood to be the mother of the Father and of the Holy Spirit. He compares these authors to Nestorius, saying that the humanity of Christ and the maternity of the Virgin are so connected that whoever errs about one must also err about the other. Nestorius erred about the humanity, stating that the person of the humanity is other than the person of the divinity in Christ. Therefore, he had to say the Virgin was not the Mother of God but of the man, because, according to him, God and man are not one in Christ. The thirteenth century teachers who allowed Mary to be called only "Mother of the Son of God," are, like Nestorius, less than just to Mary. Although the name "God" is common to the three Persons, it can be used correctly for one Person. It can be said, "God generates," when only the Father generates, just as it is said, "A man runs," when only Peter runs. Therefore, we ought to proclaim simply that the Virgin is the Mother of God, as we proclaim that Jesus is true God. Because it is one Person who subsists in the humanity and divinity, therefore the natures have a communication of idioms or properties, as St. John Damascene says. Therefore, as his enemies are said to have crucified the Lord of glory, although not according as he is the Lord of glory, so it must be said that the Virgin is the Mother of God, although she did not bear him according to his divinity.<sup>744</sup>

<sup>742</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 3, q. 2, a. 1, ad 1 & 3; III, 32, 4, ad 2.

<sup>743</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 8, a. 5, resp.

<sup>744</sup> Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 4, q. 2, a. 2, resp. & ad 1.

Taking the question from the point of view of logical "supposition" or the manner in which a name "stands for" its object, according to the Angelic Doctor, every name signifying some nature in the concrete can stand for any hypostasis [complete, independent individual] of that nature. But since the Incarnation was brought about in a hypostasis, the name "God" can stand for the hypostasis having human nature and divine. And whatever belongs to the divine nature or the human, can be attributed to that Person, whether a name signifying the divine nature stands for it, or a name signifying the human nature. To be conceived and to be born are attributed to the Person according to the nature in which he was conceived and born. Since the human nature was assumed by the Divine Person at the very beginning of the conception, it can truly be said that God was conceived and born of the Virgin. Now a woman is said to be someone's mother if she has conceived and borne him, so it follows that the Blessed Virgin is truly said to be Mother of God. The Virgin Mary would *not* be the Mother of God *only* in one of two cases: either if the humanity were conceived and born before that man was the Son of God, as Photinus said, or if the humanity were not assumed into the unity of the Person or Hypostasis of the Word of God, as Nestorius held. But since both of these are erroneous, we must hold that the Virgin Mary is the Mother of God.<sup>745</sup>

Since Suarez, many theologians have said Mary's relation to Christ puts her into the hypostatic order, or order of the Hypostatic Union, a supernatural order with a special degree of the supernatural.<sup>746</sup> Some distinguish between including the Divine Maternity in the Hypostatic Order and including the person of Mary herself.<sup>747</sup> St. Thomas does not speak of the hypostatic order but does compare the Divine Maternity with the humanity of Christ, saying they both have a certain infinite dignity. In both cases, of course, the infinite dignity is relative. Infinity belongs to God. The dignity of anything created can be infinite only so far as it is related to God.

#### The Maternal Relation, Different in *Sentences* and in *Summa*

The different approaches of the *Sentences* and the *Summa* have an effect on the questions of the filiation in Christ and of the Divine Maternity. In the *Sentences*, St. Thomas sees only one motive of the filiation of Christ in regard to Mary, that of generation, in which Mary physically played the role of Mother.<sup>748</sup> In the *Summa*, there are two formal motives for declaring Christ to be Mary's

<sup>745</sup> Aquinas, III, 35, 4, c.

<sup>746</sup> J. Chiodini, *loc. cit.*, 38-9; N. Garcia Garces, "Explicación ultima del puesto y misión de la Virgen," *Estudios Marianos*, 30 (1968) 90.

<sup>747</sup> J. De Aldama, "Ultimos decenios," p. 74; cf. I, 25, 6, ad 4.

<sup>748</sup> Manteau-Bonamy, p. 53; Aquinas, *III Sent.*, d. 8, a. 5.

true Son. The first, in so far as he subsists personally in the nature engendered. The second, in so far as his nature is at the terminus of a perfect human generation.<sup>749</sup>

To these two motives of filiation correspond two formalities in Mary's maternity: first of all, the Divine Maternity, in relation to the Person subsisting in the begotten nature; then the human maternity, the generative function through which the Virgin is at the beginning of the human, physical generation of Christ. Of the two, only the Divine Maternity, always referred to the Person of the Word united hypostatically to the humanity, affects the very being of Mary in its ontological personality.<sup>750</sup>

Manteau-Bonamy calls the two motives of filiation, "personal" and "specific," that is, referring to the human species. In relation to his Mother, the Word has a *personal* motive of filiation, because of the Divine Subsistence in the humanity and a *specific* motive, which is his perfect human generation. It is true that these motives do not really involve the Divine Word in regard to a creature but, on the other hand, they involve very really the creature, Mary, in relation to him as Mother to Son. By the Divine Maternity, the being of the nature of the Virgin is truly referred to the Son of the Father, subsisting in a nature formed in her and by her.<sup>751</sup>

In the *Sentences*, St. Thomas considered the Divine Maternity as a dignity which did not affect the person of Mary intrinsically.<sup>752</sup> In the *Summa*, he no longer thinks so. In the *Summa*, the Angelic Doctor shows that the Divine Maternity, as well as the humanity of Christ and created beatitude are all most excellent because they are correctly defined only in relation to the Divine Good, for they are essentially referred to God himself, the author of the supernatural order.<sup>753</sup> In the *Sentences*, he had distinguished between, on the one hand, Christ's humanity and created beatitude and, on the other, the Divine Maternity.<sup>754</sup>

In the *Sentences*, he said the human nature of Christ, the Divine Maternity, and grace, all have a somewhat infinite dignity because they are related to God. But there is a difference. Mary's motherhood is of infinite perfection only relatively. No judgment can be made about her absolutely. To say that nothing could be better than the Blessed Virgin really means that one could not be mother of a better Son. But, in contrast, we may say, simply and directly, that

<sup>749</sup> Manteau-Bonamy, p.124; Aquinas, III, 35, 4 & 5.

<sup>750</sup> Manteau-Bonamy, p. 124.

<sup>751</sup> Manteau-Bonamy, pp.234-5.

<sup>752</sup> Aquinas, *I Sent.*, d. 44, q. 1, a. 3, sol.

<sup>753</sup> Aquinas, I, 25, 6, ad 4.

<sup>754</sup> Manteau-Bonamy, p. 128; Aquinas, *I Sent.*, d. 44, q. 1, a. 3, sol.

there can be nothing better than Christ the man. Here we may speak absolutely.<sup>755</sup> This is the teaching of the *Sentences*.

In the *Summa*, this is changed. He treats the humanity of Christ and the Divine Maternity in the same way.

"...The humanity of Christ, because it is united to God, and created beatitude, because it is the enjoyment of God, and the Blessed Virgin, because she is the Mother of God, have a certain infinite dignity from the infinite good which is God. And in that sense, nothing can be better than they, just as nothing can be better than God."<sup>756</sup>

Thus St. Thomas changed significantly his perspective both on the Incarnation and on the Divine Maternity between his *Commentary on the Sentences* and his *Summa theologiae*. In the process, he increased the dignity which he attributed to the Divine Maternity. In the *Summa*, the Divine Maternity affects Mary intrinsically and has, absolutely, a certain infinite dignity. Just as he moved more to a Christology "from above," so also he now has something more of a "Mariology from above."

### Consequences of the Maternal Relation

Vatican Council II, in the *Constitution on the Liturgy*, declares Mary, because of her link to her Son's saving work, has a meaning and impact on the whole Church, consequences of her maternal relationship for all of us:

In celebrating this annual cycle of the mysteries of Christ, Holy Church honors the Blessed Mary, Mother of God, with a special love. She is inseparably linked with her Son's saving work. In her the Church admires and exalts the most excellent fruit of redemption, and joyfully contemplates, as in a faultless image, that which she herself desires and hopes wholly to be.<sup>757</sup>

Fr. Eamon Carroll compares her "pivotal position in salvation" to that of Abraham: As Abraham was indispensable to Israel, so Mary is indispensable to Christ.<sup>758</sup>

<sup>755</sup> Aquinas, *I Sent.*, d. 44, q. 1, a. 3, sol.

<sup>756</sup> Aquinas, III, 25, 6, ad 4; Manteau-Bonamy, p. 128. ...Humanitas Christi ex hoc quod est unita Deo, et beatitudo creata ex hoc quod est fruitio Dei, et Beata Virgo ex hoc quod est Mater Dei, habent quandam dignitatem infinitam, ex bono infinito quod est Deus. Et ex hac parte non potest aliquid fieri melius eis, sicut non potest aliquid melius esse Deo.

<sup>757</sup> Vatican II, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, n. 103; *Vatican Council II: the conciliar and post conciliar documents*, ed. A. Flannery (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press: 1975), p. 29.

<sup>758</sup> E. Carroll, "Mary, the Mother of Jesus," *Our Lady's Digest*, Nov.-Dec., 1976, p. 81.

## Consequences of the Maternal Relation according to St. Thomas

## • Consequences for Mary Herself

Our Lady underwent a further sanctification because of her Divine Maternity. St. Thomas held three sanctifications: the first before birth, the second at the Annunciation, which was the beginning of the Divine Maternity, and the third when she entered heaven.<sup>759</sup> He does not seem to have discussed the problem taken up by later authors, whether the Divine Maternity is in itself formally sanctifying.<sup>760</sup>

Our Lady is honored with the cult of hyperdulia, above all other creatures, but not by latria, which is due to God alone.

[T]he adoration of latria is not due her, but only the veneration of dulia: more eminently however than to other creatures, insofar as she is Mother of God. And therefore it is that she is owed, not any dulia, but hyperdulia.<sup>761</sup>

## • Consequences for Others

Our Lady's Divine Maternity had, of course, consequences for others. Certainly the Child she mothered affects us all. Also, her mothering of him has an effect on our life, on our Christ-life, and our relation to the Father. In chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium*, the Second Council of the Vatican instructs us: "As St. Ambrose taught, the Mother of God is a type of the Church in the order of faith, charity and perfect union with Christ. For in the mystery of the Church, which is itself rightly called mother and virgin, the blessed Virgin stands out in eminent and singular fashion as exemplar both of virgin and mother."<sup>762</sup> The exemplar is a cause; the exemplified, an effect. "The Son whom she brought forth is he whom God placed as the first born among many brethren (Rom. 8:29), that is, the faithful, in whose generation and formation she cooperates with a mother's love."<sup>763</sup>

The Bishops of the United States, in their pastoral, *Behold Your Mother*, develop this theme:

<sup>759</sup> Aquinas, III, 27, 5, ad 2; cf. a. 3, ad 3.

<sup>760</sup> J. de Aldama, *loc. cit.*, 80; J. Bover, *loc. cit.*, 256; N. Garcia-Garces, *loc. cit.*, 80, J. Delgado Varela, "Maternidad formalmente santificante," *Estudios Marianos*, 8 (1949) 178.

<sup>761</sup> Aquinas, III, 25, 5c. [N]on debetur ei adoratio latriae, sed solum veneratio duliae: eminentius tamen quam ceteris creaturis, inquantum ipsa est mater Dei. Et ideo dicitur quod debetur ei, non qualiscumque dulia, sed hyperdulia.

<sup>762</sup> A. Flannery (ed.), *Vatican Council II: the conciliar and post conciliar documents* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1975) pp. 419-420, n. 63.

<sup>763</sup> *Ibid.* p. 420.

Even more anciently [than Our Lady – L. Gl.], the Church was regarded as the “new Eve.” The Church is the bride of Christ, formed from His side in the sleep of death on the cross, as the first Eve was formed by God from the side of the sleeping Adam. As the first Eve was “mother of the living,” the Church becomes the “new mother of the living.” In time, some of the maternal characteristics of the Church were seen in Mary, and so St. Epiphanius (d. 403) calls Mary “the mother of the living.”<sup>764</sup>

Fr. Jelly continues, in the same vein:

The new Eve image, which reflects the most ancient meditation of the Church on Mary after the scriptures, was also attributed to the Church herself. Mary, as the archetype of the Church, was never far from the mind of the Fathers. They contemplated in her grace-filled reception of the Word of God and in her generous response of faith and loving obedience to redemption, the model *par excellence* of what it means to be a Christian disciple, a member of the Church.

In the faith-understanding of the ancient Church the *Theotokos* was never dissociated from her special relationship with the Church. Cardinal Newman, after his prayerful and scholarly meditation upon the witness of the patristic period, summed it up beautifully when he preached: “her glories are not only for the sake of her Son: they are for our sakes too.”<sup>765</sup> They are for the sake of Christ and of his Church.<sup>766</sup>

Fr. Jelly shows the logical conclusion, following rigorously from her motherhood of Christ: “Because of her unique association with Christ our Savior, she must be related in a special way to all the redeemed members of his Body the Church.”<sup>767</sup>

He develops this further showing the necessary mutual relation:

The christocentric and ecclesiotypical characteristics of Theotokos, and of contemporary marian doctrine and devotion generally, are mutually complementary and cannot really be in conflict. For how can Mary be related to Christ without simultaneously being intimately associated with the ecclesial body that he received through his redemptive activity? At the same time, how can she be the Archetype of the Church unless her unique relationship with Christ becomes the exemplar for the Church’s own share in his redeeming work? Consequently, to concentrate on the ecclesio-typical aspects of the Theotokos should not distort its basic christocentric character and vice versa.<sup>768</sup>

<sup>764</sup> St. Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 78, 18; PG 42, 728 - 729; Vat. II, *Lumen Gentium*, n. 56, Flannery, p. 416; U.S. Bishops, *Behold Your Mother*, n. 41, p. 16.

<sup>765</sup> J. Newman, *The New Eve* (Westminster, Md., 1952), p. 89.

<sup>766</sup> Jelly, “Concrete meaning,” p. 34.

<sup>767</sup> Jelly, “Hierarchy of truths,” p. 222.

<sup>768</sup> Jelly, “Concrete meaning,” p. 36; cf. O. Semmelroth, *Commentary on the documents of Vatican II*, Vol. 1, ed. H. Vorgrimler (New York, 1967), p. 286.



In the teaching of the Angelic Doctor, Mary, by giving birth to Christ, in some way brings grace to all. Grace is given to each one by God according to the state to which he is called. Jesus Christ, as man, was predestined and chosen to be the Son of God and Sanctifier. It was proper to him to have such a fullness of grace that it might overflow into all. "From his fullness we have all received."<sup>769</sup> But the Blessed Virgin Mary obtained such a fullness of grace that she was closest to the author of grace, and in bearing him, channeled, in a certain way, graces to us all.<sup>770</sup>

She can obtain grace for all. Her grace overflows into all. It is a great thing in any saint when he has enough grace for the salvation of many. But the greatest thing would be to have enough for the salvation of everyone in the world. This is found in Christ and in the Blessed Virgin. Therefore it says in the Canticle of Canticles that a thousand shields are around her,<sup>771</sup> that is, remedies against dangers, because in every danger, we can obtain salvation from that glorious Virgin. Again, in every work of virtue, we can have her as a help. Therefore she says, "In me is every hope of life and of virtue."<sup>772</sup>

She exceeds the angels in purity because she was not only pure in herself but also has obtained purity for others.<sup>773</sup>

Our Lady is an example to all followers of her Son. The Common Doctor holds the whole Christian life can be reduced to five points: 1) willingly hearing the word of God, 2) believing it; 3) continuously meditating on it, 4) communicating it to others, 5) putting it into practice. St. Thomas says Mary observed all these five things in the generation of the Word.<sup>774</sup>

At Cana, Mary was mediatrix, appealing to her Son and instructing the servants.<sup>775</sup> Her presence at the wedding had a mystical significance. She was there as the counselor of the wedding, because, through her intercession, the marriage was joined to Christ by grace. "In me is every hope of life and virtue."<sup>776</sup> Christ was there as the true spouse of the soul, as it is said in the Gospel of John,

<sup>769</sup> John 1:16.

<sup>770</sup> Aquinas, III, 27, 5, ad 1.

<sup>771</sup> Canticle 4: 4.

<sup>772</sup> Sirach 24: 25, Vulgate and Douay; Aquinas, *Expositio super salutatione angelica*. *Opuscula omnia* IV. P. Mandonnet, ed. Paris: Lethielleux, 1927, 458.

<sup>773</sup> Aquinas, *Expositio super salutatione angelica*, 459.

<sup>774</sup> Roschini, "S. Tommaso e la Madonna," p. 5.

<sup>775</sup> Aquinas, *Super Evangelium S. Joannis lectura*, cap. 2, l. 3; Turin, Marietti, 1952, #344.

<sup>776</sup> Sirach 24:25, Vulgate and Douay. *Super Joannis*, cap. 2, l. 2, #343. "Clearly, grace is a unity power (*medium uniendi*). Bonaventure refers to it as wedlock (*connubium*) Sirach 24:25, Vulgate and Douay. *Super Joannis*, cap. 2, l. 2, #343. "Clearly, grace is a unity power (*medium uniendi*). Bonaventure refers to it as wedlock (*connubium*)

"He who has the bride is the bridegroom."<sup>777</sup> The disciples were there as friends of the bridegroom, as if marrying the Church to Christ, as it was said, "I have married you as a chaste virgin to one husband, Christ."<sup>778</sup>

In these material nuptials, something of the miracle pertains to the mother, something to Christ, and something to the disciples. When it says, "And the wine having run short, etc.," it shows what pertains to the mother, what to Christ, and what to the disciples. To the mother belongs the obtaining of the miracle. To Christ pertains the performing of the miracle, as is stated, "There were six stone water jars, etc." To the disciples pertains the response to the miracle. "Jesus performed this first of his signs at Cana in Galilee. Thus did he reveal his glory and his disciples believed in him."<sup>779</sup>

E. Carroll says, "McHugh suggests [in *The Mother of Jesus in the New Testament*, L. Gl.] that is the admittedly ecclesial meaning of the woman clothed with the sun of the Book of Revelation should not be divorced from Cana and Calvary."<sup>780</sup> Thus, Cana can be further understood in the light of chapter twelve of the Apocalypse. The title "woman" is used in significant ways in both the Book of Revelation and the Book of Genesis. This usage shows the bearers have an important role in the plan of salvation.

Later writers have seen Mary's Divine Maternity as the root of all her other privileges as Mother of all, Mediatrix of grace, Queen.<sup>781</sup> In the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, there is not more than a faint foreshadowing of this. He does not see the Spiritual Maternity of Mary as later writers do. He does see the Divine Maternity as God's basic gift to her and her Divine Son as her basic gift to us.

And he definitely excludes her from the ministerial priesthood: "Non ordinabatur gratia sua ad plantationem Ecclesiae per modum doctrinae et administrationis sacramentorum, sicut per Apostolos factum est."<sup>782</sup>

#### • Not Based on "Woman, Behold Thy Son"

In the twentieth century, Catholics take Christ's word from the cross, saying Mary is mother of St. John, the beloved disciple, as involving all us disciples whom Jesus loves and as the basic charter of her motherhood over us. For instance, the American bishops, quoting those very words of Jesus in their pas-

<sup>777</sup> John 3:29.

<sup>778</sup> II Cor., 11: 2; *Super Joannis*, l. 2, #343.

<sup>779</sup> John 2: 11.

<sup>780</sup> E. Carroll,

<sup>781</sup> H. McBride, "The nexus between the Divine Maternity and Mary's other prerogatives," *Marian Studies*, 6 (1955) 136.

<sup>782</sup> Aquinas, *In I Sent.*, d. 16, q. 1, a. 2, ad 4.

toral letter, *Behold Your Mother: woman of faith*, say, "The Gospel means more than the dying Jesus is providing for His Mother's care. St. John's thought goes beyond such limited domestic details." They go on, in the same commentary on Christ's dying words, to quote Pierre Benoît, O.P.,<sup>783</sup> "The Mother of Jesus brings forth in him and with him that whole new people that is to spring from his Resurrection; all these children Mary carries in her womb as she once carried Jesus."<sup>784</sup> And all Catholics today would agree. Even the liturgy, that privileged source of Catholic teaching, proclaims this: "While she stood beside the cross of Jesus, you gave her to us as our loving mother."<sup>785</sup>

St. Thomas, however – like St. Bonaventure, as we shall see -- seems not to do so. He says, first, Jesus needed no help. "Jesus needed no helper for the Redemption of all."<sup>786</sup> He also says, "But since it was fitting to seek that his mother, crushed by grief, be taken care of, since he was going away, he handed her over to the disciple whom he loved, who would take good care of her."<sup>787</sup> Further on, he adds, "A place for morality is arranged, and the good teacher instructs by his example that the care of parents is provided for by loving children: as if that wood where the limbs of the dying man were fixed were also the chair of the instructor."<sup>788</sup> And he says nothing about her being the mother of the rest of us disciples. He does say that "she received within herself Him who is full of every grace and, in giving birth to Him, she, in a certain way, brought grace to us all." But there is little of our contemporary exuberance, praising Mary for each individual grace imparted to each individual soul.<sup>789</sup> The Angelic Doctor says, quite explicitly: "Christ made a testament from the cross and divided family duties between mother and disciple. The Lord founded not only a public testament but also a domestic one."<sup>790</sup>

<sup>783</sup> P. Benoît, *The passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969, p. 141.

<sup>784</sup> National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Behold Your Mother: Woman of Faith*. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1973.

<sup>785</sup> Prayer over the gifts, Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows, Sept. 15, *The Sacramentary of The Roman Missal* (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1985).

<sup>786</sup> Aquinas, *Catena aurea in quattuor evangelia*, ed. 8 (Turin: Marietti, 1925), v. 2, p. 628. "... Jesus non egebat adiutore ad redemptionem omnium."

<sup>787</sup> Aquinas, "Quia vero conveniens erat matrem existentem dolore oppressam procuracionem quaerere, quia ipse aberat; discipulo qui diligebatur tradidit diligentiam habituro;..."

<sup>788</sup> Aquinas, *Catena*, c. 29, p. 629. "Moralis igitur insinuat locus, et exemplo suo instruit praeceptor bonus, ut a filiis piis impendatur cura parentibus: tamquam lignum illud ubi erant fixa membra morientis, etiam cathedra fuerit magistri docentis."

<sup>789</sup> Aquinas, III, 27, 5, c; cf. Jelly, *Madonna*, p. 136. "...Eum qui est plenus omnis gratia, in se reciperet; et eum pariendo, quodammodo gratiam ad omnes derivaret."

<sup>790</sup> Aquinas, *Catena*, c. 29, p. 628. "Testabatur de cruce Christus, et inter matrem atque discipulum dividebat pietatis officia. Condebat Dominus non solum publicum, sed etiam domesticum testamentum."

## The Cult of Mary, according to St. Thomas

To Mary is due, not the adoration of latria, but the veneration of dulia. But this is due her in a more eminent way than to other creatures. Since she is the Mother of God, she is owed hyperdulia.<sup>791</sup> St. Thomas allows latria to be given to the images of Christ and to the Cross. The image receives no veneration in so far as it is a thing, only in so far as it is an image of Christ. The true Cross is revered because of its contact with the members and the blood of Christ.<sup>792</sup> But a rational creature is capable of receiving veneration in herself. Therefore, no pure rational creature, such as Mary, is owed the cult of latria.<sup>793</sup>

### • Mary's Intercession for us, in Thomism

Rev. F.M. Jelly, O.P., in *Madonna*, speaks in this way of Mary's help for us:

Mary's mediation, therefore, must not be misconstrued to mean that she tries to bring Christ and us together as one mediates between labor and management during a dispute over wages or working conditions. Such an image is far removed from the mystery that we are contemplating. We do not have to go to Mary or invoke her help because Christ cannot be approached directly. After all, Christ is the incarnate Son of God, the nearness of God to us. In him and through him the Blessed Trinity, infinitely beyond us, has become accessible to each one of us. So Mary's intercessory and mediating role in glory is not to make God approachable to us, but to help make us more aware of the abiding presence of the triune God in and through Christ. She is like a loving mother with a son who can help others if only they really believe in him. And so she prepares a meeting where they can come to see and hear him, knowing just how to make her home pleasant for the meeting. She does not stand between them and her son, but stays in the background always ready to serve. Mary's mediation or motherhood in the order of grace is something like this. She knows just how to help prepare for our *direct and immediate* encounters with her saving Son by disposing *us* to open up *our* eyes of faith more fully to behold him always there to offer us the graces we need when we need them. If we allow her to have this salutary influence upon our spiritual lives, then we shall be much better disposed for the *direct* meeting with her Son and God's Son, who ever comes with the Father and the Holy Spirit to dwell in us and make us holy. When we invoke Mary, therefore, we are asking her to *act upon us and not upon God*. We are calling upon her to *help us become more open* to the gifts of God, to God himself.<sup>794</sup> [ All emphases added. L. Gl.]

<sup>791</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, III, q. 25, a. 5, c.

<sup>792</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, III, q. 25, aa. 3 & 4.

<sup>793</sup> Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, III, q. 25, a. 5.

<sup>794</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, p. 162.

The American bishops quote Fr. Jelly as follows: "Mary is not a bridge over the gap that separates us from a remote Christ.... Mary's greatness is that ...her mediation continues to create the spiritual climate for our *immediate* [emphasis added. L. Gl.] encounter with Christ."<sup>795</sup>

Fr. Jelly said, in private conference that, in interceding and obtaining grace for us, Mary is a physical, instrumental, dispositive cause. Taking the last attribute first, Mary is dispositive, not perfective cause. In the order of being, God alone is the author of "esse," the act of being. Creatures can cause "tale esse," i.e. to be in this way or that. In the supernatural order, only God is the author of grace, not creating it or concreating it but educing it from obediential potency.<sup>796</sup> Creatures can be causes of meritorious action, under grace. Mary, too, as a creature, is thus limited.

God alone can give grace to the will because He alone can act on our wills without violating our freedom. "Deus solus potest tangere voluntatem sine destruendo libertatem." When God justifies, He moves the will to free acceptance of His grace. There can be no intermediary in this divine action, not the Blessed Virgin or any of the saints, not an actual grace, not Banezian physical premotion, not even the humanity of Christ. In creation, no instrumental cause can have any place. There is no subject there for the instrumental causality to act on. In justifying a creature, God cannot act through any instrumental intermediaries because grace is a kind of new creation and no instrument can be used here, either. Proper to God is immediacy of supposit. (Creatures can have immediacy of power.) At least, there can be no instrument with perfective causality, a causality that might attain to the effect, attain to grace.

M. Morry says of immediacy of supposit and of power:

A being may operate by an immediacy of supposit or by an immediacy of power, for in any being there is the supposit which acts, and the power by which it acts. There is an immediacy of supposit when, between the supposit acting and the effect, no subordinate supposit intervenes as a coagent. There is an immediacy of power when the agent acts without needing another power in order to be coupled to the effect.<sup>797</sup>

Morry quotes St. Thomas:

<sup>795</sup> Jelly, "Mary and the Eucharistic Liturgy," *Our Lady's Digest* XXVII (May-June 1972), p. 21, in U.S. Bishops, "Behold," no. 67.

<sup>796</sup> At first, St. Thomas said grace could be created. Later, speaking according to Aristotelian predicaments, he said it was not created or concreating but educed from obediential potency. F. Jelly, private conference, 10/99.

<sup>797</sup> M. Morry, *Our Lady's influence in the distribution of grace to men*; unpublished dissertation, Washington, D.C., Dominican House of Studies, 1970, p. 134.

If we consider the supposits acting, any particular agent is immediate to its effect. But if we consider the power by which the action comes about, then the power of the superior cause will be more immediate to the effect than the power of the inferior, for the power of the inferior is not conjoined to the effect except through the power of the higher; wherefore ...the power of the first cause acts upon the being caused and enters into it more vehemently.<sup>798</sup>

Morry, dealing with the objection that Mary is not in contact with the persons she instrumentally affects, says, "Since an instrument is not in motion of itself then neither is it ...by quantitative or personal contact that it contacts the subject.... Rather, the instrument contacts the subject by the power of the principal cause, i.e., by the contact of power."<sup>799</sup> Therefore, Mary does not need immediacy of supposit.

An instrument can be dispositive or perfective. Mary is a dispositive instrumental cause, not a perfective one. A spiritual director or a good friend can help us in the order of moral dispositive causality. Also, a missionary's preaching. Preaching is not an eighth sacrament. It is a dispositive cause. Mary is more, a *physical* instrumental dispositive cause. She distributes grace, not as the Triune God does, but in a physical, instrumental, dispositive way.<sup>800</sup>

Morry explains *physical* instrumental causality, as opposed to moral, in this way:

In addition to Mary's activity of intercession, some theologians recognize a direct influence of Our Lady upon graces distributed.<sup>801</sup> They say that her activity has

<sup>798</sup> Aquinas, *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 7. Si consideremus supposita agentia, quodlibet agens particulare est immediatum ad suum effectum. Si autem consideremus virtutem qua fit actio, sic virtus superioris causae erit immediatior effectui quam virtus inferioris; nam virtus inferior non conjungitur effectui nisi per virtutem superioris; unde ...virtus causae primae prius agit in causatum et vehementius ingreditur in ipsum.

<sup>799</sup> Morry, *Influence*, p. 216.

<sup>800</sup> A similar debate is had in relation to the causality of sacraments. "Theologians have long speculated on the manner in which the Sacraments confer grace. This effort has resulted in many theories regarding the causality of the Sacraments. . . . The two main divisions of opinion are the theories of physical and moral causality. . . . Proponents of physical causality teach that the sacramental rite is directly involved in the infusion of grace in a manner analogous to that in which an instrument, such as a pen or a brush, is said to be the cause of an effect, the written page or picture. . . . Physical causality is divided into dispositive and perfective. The first considers the action of the sacramental rite as terminating in a physical disposition exigent of grace. The latter posits a physical influence in the rite that reaches efficiently to the grace itself. Those who teach moral causality think of the Sacraments as effecting God's grant of grace by reason of their inner worth as actions of Christ, in view of which grace is infallibly infused by God." J. Quinn, "Sacraments, theology of," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. Cf. B. Leeming, *Principles of sacramental theology* (Westminster, Md., 1960).

<sup>801</sup> Morry here footnotes a number of theologians who defend a physical, more-than-moral instrumental causality; footnote C154, with reference to footnote C-40, p. 285f. One of the more

an immediate influence upon the effect, not only an influence through moral causality. This direct and immediate influence upon the effect places Mary's activity in the order of physical causality. The physical cause produces the effect, and not a "title" to the effect, nor does it act by influencing the physical cause to produce the effect.<sup>802</sup>

## 2. The Permanent Relation of Motherhood according to St. Bonaventure

### RELATION OF MOTHER

The Franciscan Master agrees with both St. Thomas and Alexander of Hales that filiation is multiplied only by reason of the subject, the Person.<sup>803</sup> Consequently, as St. Thomas said above,<sup>804</sup> Our Lord is related to his mother not by a real relation — since he is God -- only by a mental or logical relation, to the extent that, when he was born in time, he acquired a new "respectus," so that he who, from eternity was the Son of the Father, became in time the Son of the Virgin.<sup>805</sup> This logical relation of Jesus to Mary has a foundation in reality, Mary's *real* relation to Jesus. Therefore it is called a "virtual" relation.

Bonaventure held firmly that God, infinitely perfect and independent of creatures, cannot be related "ad extra" by any real relation.

The Lord relies ["innititur"] on nothing because he does not depend on anything, as we hold in theology ...and it is understood from theology and philosophy that God is not related to anything outside by a true relation; but inwardly to the Son he is related by a true relation, in other cases, however, his relation is a nominal one ["secundum dici"].<sup>806</sup>

Our Lady is not called Mother of God because she caused the Word of God to exist or bestowed divinity upon him but because, in her human way, she conceived and bore a divine person.

To the objection that the blessed Virgin bore a person, the answer is that it is true that she bore the Son of God. But, since a person is generated by reason of nature and there are two natures in that person ...he also has two generations.<sup>807</sup>

accessible of these sources is A. J. Robichaud, "Mary, dispensatrix of all graces, in *Mariology*, 3 vols., ed. J. Carol (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1957), vol. 2, p. 456. Another book dedicated to Mary's physical instrumentality is J. Schug, *Mary, Mother* (St. Francis Chapel Press, 1992).

<sup>802</sup> Morry, *Distribution*, p. 123.

<sup>803</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 8, a. 2, q. 2, ad 1; III, p. 194b; Chietini 35, n. 13. St. Thomas, *III Sent.*, d. 10, q. 3, a. 5, ed. Venice 1593; VII 33cd; *S.Theol.* p. III, q. 35, a. 5, ed. Rome 1888-1906; XI 356b. Hales, *S. Theol.*, p. III, q. 10, m. 3, ed. Venice 1575; III 34d-35a. Chietini 35, n. 13.

<sup>804</sup> Part 2, Chap. 4, no. 1, a, above.

<sup>805</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 8, a. 2, q. 2, ad 2; III, p. 194; cf. *ibid.* ad 5; III, p. 195; Chietini 35, n. 14.

<sup>806</sup> Bonaventure, *De sanctis angelis*, sermo 1; IX, p. 618; Chietini, p. 36, n. 15.

<sup>807</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 5, a. 2, q. 2, ad 4; III 134.

[Mary] ...is called Mother of God not because she bore him according to the divine nature but because of the communication of idioms.<sup>808</sup>

And this, in fact, is enough for the Blessed Mother to be called God-bearer. Just as the First Person of the Blessed Trinity is Father of Christ the man, although he did not beget him according to his human nature, so Mary is mother of Christ-God, even though she did not conceive him according to the divine nature. "The Son of God is related [*"sic se habet"*] to the Virgin Mother as the Son of Man is related to God the Father; but Jesus is the Son of God the Father: therefore God is the Son of Mary: therefore the Virgin Mary is rightly named Mother of God."<sup>809</sup> In view of the communication of idioms, whatever belongs to either of his natures can be predicated of the Person of Christ. Thus, although Christ was conceived by the Virgin only according to his human nature, this generation is predicated of the Divine Person, the ultimate center of attribution. "Whatever is said of that man is said of the Son of God because of the communication of idioms; but Jesus was the Son of Blessed Mary: therefore, by nature of this relation [*"a relativis"*] Blessed Mary is the Mother of God."<sup>810</sup>

We know from what has been said,<sup>811</sup> that St. Bonaventure rightly considered the Divine Maternity to be the perfect expression of the dogma of the Incarnation. "[The Blessed Virgin]...is said to be the Mother of God ...because of ...the expression of the mystery of the Incarnation."<sup>812</sup> And he quotes St. John Damascene to the same purpose: "Justly and truly we name [her --L. Gl.] Theotokos, that is Mother of God; for this name constitutes the whole mystery of the Incarnation."<sup>813</sup>

Because the Divine Maternity defends the dogma of the Incarnation, which cannot be denied without "the foundation of the whole Christian faith perishing,"<sup>814</sup> the Franciscan teacher can call Mary the woman who "destroys all heresies in the whole world."<sup>815</sup>

The Bonaventurian demonstration depends directly on St. John Damascene. Through him, it reproduces the argument of Tradition put forth by St.

<sup>808</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, ad 2; III, 116; Chiettni 36, n. 16.

<sup>809</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, fund. 4; III, p. 115; Chiettni, p. 36, n. 17.

<sup>810</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, fund. 3; III, p. 115; *ibid.*, ad 2; III, p. 116; Chiettni, p. 36, n.18.

<sup>811</sup> Chiettni, pp. 1-36.

<sup>812</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, corp.; III, p. 116.

<sup>813</sup> J. Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa*, l. 3, c. 12; PG 94 1027; St. Bonaventure, *ibid.*, fund. 2; III, p. 115; Chiettni 37, n. 19.

<sup>814</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 5, a. 2, q. 2, corp.; III, p. 133.

<sup>815</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, corp.; III, p. 115.



Cyril of Alexandria and other Fathers. St. Bonaventure never explicitly cites St. Cyril of Alexandria in Marian texts, as Innocenti notes.<sup>816</sup> St. Thomas does.<sup>817</sup>

#### BRIDE OF GOD

Besides the relation of motherhood, other relations are mentioned and other titles than "mother" are used by Bonaventure about Mary. Tavad says:

The theme of the God-given beauty of the Virgin is harmoniously prolonged in that of her being God's very special spouse. This had been a familiar idea in spiritual literature: the commentaries on the *Song of Songs* commonly read the Old Testament poem as the song of the espousals between God and every faithful soul. The Virgin Mary being seen as the best and highest example of fidelity, she naturally became the first and most complete bride of God.<sup>818</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor says:

The entire blessed Trinity has known you, Mary, as bride of chaste love, palace of holy dwelling, instrument of wondrous deed.<sup>819</sup>

The concept of Our Lady as God's bride recurs in the *Collationes*, the last of his writings,<sup>820</sup> especially in the *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*.<sup>821</sup> It recurs, admittedly, in an implicit manner. "To this Virgin Gabriel had to be sent as paranymp." <sup>822</sup> This Latin term — borrowed from the Greek — was used in reference to a young man in the wedding party who accompanied the bride and groom home. He was somewhat like our modern American "best man." Clearly a matrimonial reference, implying that the Annunciation was a bridal experience.<sup>823</sup>

If the Annunciation was a kind of wedding, then who married whom? Our Lady married God. The Seraphic Doctor tells us: "She alone pleased the Most

<sup>816</sup> *Il concetto teologico della maternità divina in Giovanni Duns Scoto*, SF III (1931) 413 notes; Chietini, 37, n. 23.

<sup>817</sup> F. Morgott, *La doctrine sur la Vierge Marie ou Mariologie de Saint Thomas d'Aquin*, transl. L. C. Bourquard, Paris, 1881, p. XXV; P. Renaudin, "La théologie de Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie d'après St. Thomas," *Revue Thomiste* XLI (1936): 73-93.

<sup>818</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, pp. 138f.

<sup>819</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumptione B.V.M., Sermo III*; IX, p. 694. Tota siquidem beata Trinitas te cognovit, Maria, sponsam castae dilectionis, aulam sanctae inhabitationis, officinam mirae operationis. Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 139.

<sup>820</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 166.

<sup>821</sup> Written 1268; Bonaventure died in 1274; his very last work was the *Collationes in Hexameron*; Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 166.

<sup>822</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 6; V, p. 484. "Ad istam Virginem mitti debuit Gabriel tamquam paranympus." Transl. Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 171.

<sup>823</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 171.

High.”<sup>824</sup> He also, in the same section, quotes St. Bernard, “...Regis animum in sui concupiscentia inclinaret.” [“...She inclined the mind of the King to desire her.”] As Tavad concludes: “Mary the Virgin became wedded to God.”<sup>825</sup>

The figure of the spiritual marriage will be developed masterfully by Sts. Theresa of Avila and John of the Cross but it was most fully realized in Our Lady at the Annunciation. The Seraphic Doctor says of her, “...The Virgin ... was holy by the holiness ...of uncorrupted modesty, by the holiness of prompt obedience, and by the holiness of [God’s] full benevolence.”<sup>826</sup> Tavad says of this reception of the holiness of God’s full benevolence, “[T]his, as Bonaventure draws from the image of wedlock, was an experience of love which the Seraphic Doctor does not shrink from describing with great realism.”

Tavad continues:

The Holy Spirit is love, and although he is given with his gifts, there is no gift from which he cannot be parted except the gift of love. For other virtues are common to the good and the evil, and since the love of God and neighbor is proper to the good and pious, [it follows that] love alone sanctifies. The Holy Spirit comes, because love is added to love to transcend the measures of others ...The glorious Virgin, bringing forth the Son and the light of God, gave the light to the world through the fire of divine love, and she was not corrupted. The love of charity preserves from corruption .... As a son of the flesh is born from the love of a man with a woman, so from the Virgin’s love with God, the Son of God was born.<sup>827</sup>

Also from Tavad:

Further on, Bonaventure asks himself: “What made the Virgin conceive.”<sup>828</sup> The question is both theological, touching God’s action, and personal, touching Mary’s experience. The answer is again borrowed from the nuptiality of the divine love which, in the person of the Holy Spirit, made its dwelling in her....

<sup>824</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 6; V. p. 484. “Haec sola placuit Altissimum.” Transl. Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 171.

<sup>825</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 171.

<sup>826</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 6; V, p. 484. “...Virgo ... sancta, sanctitate ...pudicitiae incorruptae, sanctitate obedientiae promptae, et sanctitate benevolentiae plenae.”

<sup>827</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 8; V, p. 485. Spiritus sanctus amor est, et quamquam detur cum donis suis, non est donum a quo non possit separari, nisi donum amoris. Cum ceterae virtutes communes sunt bonis et malis; dilectio Dei et proximi propria est bonis et piis; ipsa sola est, quae sanctificat. *Supervenit Spiritus sanctus*, quia additur amor amoris, ut metas aliorum transcenderet ...Virgo gloriosa, Filium Dei et lucem proferens, per ignem divini amoris lucem mundo dedit et corrupta non fuit. Amor caritatis a corruptione conservat.... Sicut ex amore viri cum muliere nascitur filius carnalis; ita ex amore Virginis cum Deo natus est Dei Filius. Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 172.

<sup>828</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 11; V, p. 485.

Wedlock can serve as an image beyond the event of the Annunciation. Bonaventure sees it again in the Crucifixion, where Mary paid the price of redemption at the foot of the cross. She still experienced her nuptial relationship with God, as she was "strong and pious with compassion for Christ."<sup>829</sup> This compassion was a parturition. Women normally feel pains when they give birth, "before the birth. But the blessed Virgin felt no pains birthing, for she did not conceive from sin ..., but she felt the pains after birthing. Whence she gave birth before the pains of parturition. In the cross she felt them..."<sup>830</sup>

Propter parturitionem habet mulier dolorem, scilicet antecedentem ad partum. Sed beata Virgo non habuit dolorem antecedentem partum; quia non concepit ex peccato ..., sed habuit dolorem post partum. Unde peperit, antequam parturiret. In cruce parturivit;...<sup>831</sup>

As Tavard notes, Mary is called the bride of God, even of her son, in many places. St. Ephrem the Syrian has her say: "I am thy sister .... I am also mother .... I am also thy bride."<sup>832</sup> Graef says, "Here for the first time in Christian literature Mary is called the Bride of her Son."<sup>833</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem may have called Mary bride of God.<sup>834</sup> C. Neumann concludes St. Ambrose may have regarded her not only as Christ's mother but also as his spouse.<sup>835</sup> Graef thinks this is interpreting St. Ambrose from the point of view of a later age.<sup>836</sup> This concept, that "she is not only his mother, she is also his bride," is clearly found in Modestus of Jerusalem, "an idea," Graef says, "that is gaining ground about this time,"<sup>837</sup> probably influenced by Christ's presentation of himself as the Bridegroom."<sup>838</sup> "Later the same conception in the West will be due mainly to the Marian interpretation of the Canticle."<sup>839</sup>

Germanus of Constantinople calls her the Bride of God.<sup>840</sup> Rupert of Deutz said she was "the spouse of God the Father," "the spouse of the Son of God

<sup>829</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, n. 18; V, p. 487.

<sup>830</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 173.

<sup>831</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 18; V, p. 487.

<sup>832</sup> 16, 10, *Ephraem of Syria*, "Hymn on the Nativity," *Nisibene Hymns, Works* (Rome edition) 2, p. 429E,F; Graef, *Mary*, I, pp. 57f.

<sup>833</sup> Graef, *Mary*, I, p.58.

<sup>834</sup> Cyril, in a doubtful passage in *Catecheses*, Ch. 12, no. 29; Graef, *Mary*, I, p. 68.

<sup>835</sup> C. Neumann, *The Virgin Mary in the works of St. Ambrose* (1962), p.136, Graef, *Mary*, I, p. 79, n. 5.

<sup>836</sup> Graef, *ibid*.

<sup>837</sup> c. 620 A.D.

<sup>838</sup> Graef, *Mary*, I, p. 137; Modestus, "Homily on the Assumption", (PG 86<sup>2</sup>) No. 3, p. 3288A, B.

<sup>839</sup> Graef, *Mary*, I, p. 137, n.8.

<sup>840</sup> Germanus, "Sermon II on Presentation", (PG 98), p. 317B, C; "Sermon on Annunciation," 321C, 328A.

and her own Son."<sup>841</sup> Hermann of Tournai said she is both "spouse and mother of God."<sup>842</sup> St. Bernard described her as the spouse of God.<sup>843</sup> Amadeus of Lausanne continues this thought, "no doubt under the influence of the concept of courtly love," Graef tells us, "Christ – or the Holy Spirit – is regarded as Mary's lover and she is his beloved as much as his mother."<sup>844</sup> Amadeus says, "Your Creator has become your spouse."<sup>845</sup> Aelred of Rievaulx, in a sermon on the Annunciation, says, "God [the Son - Graef] is the Bridegroom, the Virgin the bride,..."<sup>846</sup> Philip of Harvenge calls Mary Christ's Spouse and Mother.<sup>847</sup> St. Albert the Great saw her as Mother and Bride of God's Son.<sup>848</sup> According to Ubertino of Casale, the Father, at the Annunciation, took her to be his spouse.<sup>849</sup>

Permit me, please to repeat what I quoted in Part One, Context of St. Bonaventure, from Hugh of St. Victor:

"You are wholly beautiful, my love (Cant. 4:7) O admirable lover! O incomparable teacher! What is it you say? She is your mother, your love. And how is she your love? Can we believe your mother is your love? But how? Certainly she is your love and your mother. Your love because untouched, your mother because fruitful. Indeed, because you are the Son of integrity and the lover of fecundity, you have a Virgin for a mother and a loved one rejoicing over her child. First, your love bore you, the mother and Virgin Mary, afterwards, your love was born from you, mother and virgin Church. Coming in the flesh, you became the son of your spouse, a mother and a virgin in body; dying in the flesh, you became the parent of your spouse, a virgin by faith. Taking birth from your spouse, you received the substance of infirmity; dying, you gave your spouse the sacraments of incorruption.

On both sides a marvelous lover, on both sides an unparalleled lover: you loved your spouse so as to take birth from her, and you loved your spouse so as to die for her. And your spouse is one, "one is thy dove, thy flawless one; in the eyes of her mother, beyond compare, the special darling of the one who bore her (Cant.

<sup>841</sup> Rupert, *On the Trinity*, 1.7f. (PL, 167, 1576B-1577D), Graef, *Mary*, I, 228.

<sup>842</sup> Hermann, *Treatise on the Incarnation*, Ch. 11 (PL 180) 36B.

<sup>843</sup> Bernard, "Homilia III super Missus est," (PL 183)2.

<sup>844</sup> Graef, *Mary*, I, p. 245.

<sup>845</sup> Amadeus of Lausanne. "Marian homélies," *Sources Chrétiennes*, no. 72., eds. G.

Bavaud, J. Deshusses, A. Dumas (Paris, 1870), p. 102-108.

<sup>846</sup> Aelred of Rievaulx, "Sermon on the Annunciation," (PL 195) 254A; *Sermones inediti*, ed. C. Talbot; in *Series Scriptorum S. Ordinis Cisterciensis*, Vol. I, Rome, 1952.

<sup>847</sup> Philip of Harvenge. *On the Canticle*, Bk 2, 11 (PL 203) 271A; Graef, *Mary*, I, p. 255.

<sup>848</sup> Albert, *Commentary on Luke* (ch.1, 35) (vol. 22, ed. Borgnet) pp. 103f.; Graef, *Mary*, I, p. 277; A. Fries, A., *Die Gedanken des hl. Albertus Magnus über die Gottesmutter* (Freiburg, Switzerland, 1958) pp. 10-20.

<sup>849</sup> Ubertino of Casale, *Arbor Vitae crucifixae Jesu*, bk. 1, chap. 9.

6:8)." So, therefore, call your spouse, invite your love. Call, O handsome one, the beautiful, O splendid one, the graceful, O beloved, the *unequaled*.<sup>850</sup>

Barré calls these words "magnificent" and goes on to say: "Such texts certainly leave us no regret that the expression "de sponsa Christi" has lasted. Still, Hugh never developed the parallel in the opposite direction. For, if Christ embraces in one and the same love both Mary and the Church, he is also for both of them the sole object of a shared love."<sup>851</sup>

In more modern times, St. Lawrence of Brindisi "considers Mary less as the Mother of God than as his bride,..."<sup>852</sup> Jean-Jacques Olier says that God the Father, who generates the Word according to his divinity, destined Mary to generate the Word according to his humanity, thus constituting her his helper and his spouse and giving her complete possession of his Person, his treasures, his glory, and all his goods.<sup>853</sup> At his Resurrection, Christ unites himself to Our Lady, according to Olier and becomes with her one principle of divine generation. Mary is now spouse both of the Father and Christ the Son.<sup>854</sup> Anthony Stafford, an Anglican theologian, said Our Lady was the spouse of the Holy Spirit.<sup>855</sup> Sergius Bulgakov says Mary is, "in relation to the Word, Mother and Bride."<sup>856</sup>

<sup>850</sup> Hugh of St. Victor. *De Assumptione Beate Mariae*, PL 177, 1211 AB. "Tota pulchra es, amica mea (Cant. 4: 7)." O admirabilis amator! O singularis doctor! Quid dicis? Ipsa est genitrix tua, amica tua. Et quomodo amica tua? Num genetricem ipsam credimus tuam amicum? Aut quomodo? Certe amica est tua et genitrix tua. Amica tua quod intacta, genitrix tua quod fecunda. Tu siquidem integritatis filius et fecunditatis amicus, matrem habes virginem et amicum prole laetantem.

Prius te genuit amica tua, mater et virgo Maria; postea de te genita est amica tua, mater et virgo Ecclesia. In carnem veniens factus es filius sponsae tuae matris et virginis corpore; in carne moriens factus es genitor sponsae tuae virginis fide. Nascendo de sponsa tua accepisti substantiam infirmitatis; moriendo, sponsae tuae dedistis sacramenta incorruptionis.

Utroque dilector mirabilis, utroque amator singularis: sponsam tuam dilexisti ut in ea nasceris, et sponsam tuam dilexisti ut pro ea moreris. Et una est sponsa tua, "una est columba tua, perfecta tua; una est matri suae, una electa genetrici suae (Cant. VI,8)." Voca ergo sponsam tuam, invita amicum tuam. Voca formosus pulchram, speciosus decoram, dilectus *unicam*.

<sup>851</sup> H. Barré, *Marie et l'Eglise*, p. 68.

<sup>852</sup> Graef, *Mary*, II, p. 27; St. Lawrence of Brindisi, *In visionem S. Joannis Evangelistae, Mariale*, vol. I, *Opera*, 1927.) *Serm.* 1, p. 7, *Serm.* 2. P. 4, *Serm.* 3, pp. 4f; Graef sternly criticizes St. Lawrence's intense marital — and other — rhetoric, pp. 27-31.

<sup>853</sup> J.-J. Olier, *Vie intérieure de la très sainte Vierge*, ed. E. Faillon (Rome, 1875) Chap. 1, 1, p. 2, Chap. 1, 2, p. 6.

<sup>854</sup> Olier, "Explication du Magnificat," *Vie intérieure*, Chap. 13, 2, p. 241, Chap. 13, 3, p. 243.

<sup>855</sup> A. Stafford, *The Femall (sic) Glory or The life and death of our blessed Lady, the Holy Virgin Mary, God's own immaculate mother*, ed. O. Shipley (1869) pp. 35f..

<sup>856</sup> S. Bulgakov, *Sophia: The Wisdom of God* (1937), pp. 180f..

Perhaps the best-known teacher of "Mary as bride" is M. Scheeben. He wished to create a strictly scientific Mariology, based on Scripture and the Fathers. But the Fathers did not see a parallel between the couples Adam/Eve and Christ/Mary, for Mary was Christ's mother, while Eve was Adam's wife. Scheeben overcame this by saying Our Lady was the bride of Christ, as well as his mother. This "gottesbräutliche Mutterschaft," which Graef calls "an untranslatable expression meaning a motherhood that involves the fact that she is the bride of God," Scheeben calls "the key to all Mariology."<sup>857</sup> He has had considerable influence on recent Mariology but, according to Graef, "His idea of the bridal relationship between Christ and his mother has not been widely accepted."<sup>858</sup> This lack of acceptance cannot be for lack of distinguished earlier proponents, only one of which is St. Bonaventure.

#### CO-REDEEMER

This title is not mentioned explicitly by St. Bonaventure, according to G. Roschini.<sup>859</sup> The same author says the Saint taught, not explicitly, but implicitly, by force of his principles, that Our Lady merited *de congruo* and *de digno* all the grace Christ merited.<sup>860</sup> She did this not only in her compassion at the foot of the cross, where, the Saint says, she truly suffered and died with her Son ("commortua"). By offering Our Lord as a sacrifice, she restored, made satisfaction for the honor taken from God by sin. She paid the price of our Redemption, our buying-back. She received Him in the Incarnation, paid him out in the Redemption. She offered sacrifice in the Presentation of the baby Jesus in the Temple and again on Calvary. Unlike Abraham, who was willing to sacrifice his son but gave up a ram, she actually sacrificed her only Son.

G. Roschini points out that the Seraphic Doctor held that Our Lord redeemed the human race not only through his Passion but also through word and example. Here, too, Mary was joined with her Redeemer Son. Roschini calls this the "pedagogic or didactic redemption", or, in other words, "the redemption that came through his teaching". This includes both teaching by word and by example. Here too, Mary was joined with her Redeemer Son. Roschini says this is an aspect of her redemptive mediation too often neglected by Mariologists but obviously deserving clearer recognition. Our Lady's Coredemption

<sup>857</sup> Attempted approximation: "motherhood of God's bride [L. Gl]." Graef, *Mary*, II, pp. 118f.

<sup>858</sup> Scheeben, *Handbuch der Katholischen Dogmatik*, 1882, no. 1592.

<sup>859</sup> G. Roschini, "La dottrina di S. Bonaventura sulla Mediazione universale di Maria," *Marianum*, 2(1940), p. 12.

<sup>860</sup> Roschini, "Bonaventura sulla Mediazione," pp. 8f.

consists in an active and effective participation in all the redemptive work of Christ.<sup>861</sup>

### The Consequences of the Maternal Relation, according to St. Bonaventure The Consequences of this Relation for Herself

The Franciscan Doctor tells us the Divine Maternity faithfully expresses the mystery of the Incarnation and is the reason why we honor the Blessed Virgin. We do not fully understand her dignity.<sup>862</sup> “[Mary] is said to be the Mother of God ...in order to ...express the mystery of the Incarnation and to honor the Virgin herself.”<sup>863</sup> “We take for granted at the outset that whatever praise is given the Blessed Mary, is not overabundant but falls short.”<sup>864</sup> The Virgin is blessed “because she was the Mother of God, than which nothing more noble can be thought of.”<sup>865</sup> “She is situated in the highest order.”<sup>866</sup>

### Mary and the Holy Trinity

The Seraphic Doctor measures the dignity of creatures by their closeness to God<sup>867</sup>. The Blessed Mother is raised above all others since, by reason of the Divine Motherhood, she has entered into ineffable relations with the Persons of the Most Holy Trinity.<sup>868</sup>

She has a special “habitus” to God the Father, since she bore in time the same Son whom he fathers by an eternal generation “The selfsame one who from eternity was the Son of the Father, in time became the Son of the Virgin Mother.”<sup>869</sup> The Blessed Virgin seems to some extent even to be received into the eternal generation. St. Bonaventure praises her: “[The Blessed Mother] made a division with God and with creatures. The creatures’ share was good: they had the Lord Jesus Christ as God. God the Father’s share was better: he had him as Son. Mary chose the best part: she had him as God and as Son.”<sup>870</sup>

<sup>861</sup> Roschini, “Bonaventura sulla Mediazione,” pp. 9-11.

<sup>862</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, ad 2; III, p. 116ab.

<sup>863</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3, ad 2; III, p. 116ab.

<sup>864</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V. sermo 6*; IX, p. 693b.

<sup>865</sup> Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. 44; I, p. 793.

<sup>866</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nativ. Dni. sermo 1*; IX, p. 706.

<sup>867</sup> Chietti, p. 38.

<sup>868</sup> Chietti, p. 38.

<sup>869</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 2, a. 1, q. 2, c; III, p. 40. : “Idem ipse qui ab aeterno erat Filius Patris, ex tempore factus est filius Virginis matris.”

<sup>870</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V., sermo 6*; IX, p. 703; Chietti 38, n. 30.

She is also related to the Holy Spirit in a wonderful way. By his help she conceived the Word ineffably and, from that, entered into a bond with him which exceeds all comparison. The Seraphic Doctor went so far as to say that Mary, by the generation of Christ seemed in a certain way, even to excel the Holy Spirit, since he did not generate his own principle, while the Blessed Mother "had the Lord of the universe as the fruit of her womb."<sup>871</sup> [Mary] "had a fifth division with the Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son but not the Son from the Holy Spirit; but the Blessed Virgin proceeds from the Son and the Son from her."<sup>872</sup>

All the things asserted here of the Holy Spirit are valid about the whole Trinity, for all the Divine Persons effect the Incarnation, which is ascribed to the Third Person only by appropriation: "The conception [of Christ], since it is the work of the three Persons...."<sup>873</sup> "The Trinity willed to work [the Incarnation] only by itself and only in and with the Virgin."<sup>874</sup>

### Special Relation to Christ, The Word

Although the whole Trinity caused the work of the Incarnation, only the Word became incarnate and Mary did not become the mother of the Trinity but only of the second Person<sup>875</sup>. It is obvious that the Blessed Mother gained an entirely special relation to the Divine Word, about which the great Franciscan wrote: "[The Blessed Virgin, in the Incarnation] was also aided to a "contuition" of God by the conjoining of her flesh with the Word, so that she who could not perceive ["sentire"] God within herself because of the immensity of his light, perceived ["sentiret"] and knew [him] within herself through the flesh humbly assumed."<sup>876</sup> What is "contuition?" Etienne Gilson defined the word "contuitus" (i.e. contuition) in St. Bonaventure as, "The indirect apprehension, through thought, of an object which escapes us, but whose presence is in some way implied in the presence of effects which flow from it."<sup>877</sup>

<sup>871</sup> Bonaventure, *De assumpt. B.M.V. sermo* 6; IX, p. 702; Chiettni 38. "ventris sui fructum quem ab utero habuit universitatis Dominum."

<sup>872</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V. sermo* 6; IX, p. 703.

<sup>873</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 1, q. 1, corp.; III, p. 99; Chiettni 39, n. 32; Also *III Sent.*, ...d. 1; III, p.34b.

<sup>874</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V. sermo* 6; X 704a; *De Purif. B.M.V. sermo* 4; IX, p. 651; Chiettni 39, n.32.

<sup>875</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d.1, a. 2, q. 3; III, pp. 28ff; Chiettni 39, n.33.

<sup>876</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1; III, p. 79.

<sup>877</sup> *La philosophie de S. Bonaventure*, Paris, 1924, 365; Chiettni 39, n. 34. Cf. also J.-M. Bissen, O.F.M., "De la contuition," *Etudes Franciscaines* XLVI (1934): 559-569.



We must not suppose that the relation of Mary to Christ was just physical and carnal.<sup>878</sup> It brought about an even closer bond of the spiritual order. "There was, most perfectly, a double reception in Mary, who received him [her son] in the bridal chamber of her body [and] nourished him ...[and] also in the bridal chamber of her heart, by seeing him, believing in him, loving, imitating him. From both of these, she was blessed."<sup>879</sup>

Certainly Mary's love for Christ equaled and greatly surpassed the love of other mothers. Like fire, love loses its intensity the more it is divided.<sup>880</sup> The love of other mothers tends to different objects, a spouse and other children. But the Blessed Mother directed all her love, natural and supernatural toward her only son, "because her son [was] her God:"

All other mothers have children and love their spouses and so have a divided love. Besides, mothers also have several sons or daughters, and so the love divided among many is decreased. This mother alone had no husband,<sup>881</sup> had no other son or daughter; therefore she poured forth her whole heart, with all its natural power upon her only son; and thus she had the supreme *natural* love to the supreme degree ["in summo"]. The supreme *acquired* love is that which the bride has for her spouse. The Virgin Mary had that toward her Son in the highest degree ["in summo"].... The highest *gratuitous* love [emphasis added. L. Gl.] is charity which she also had in the highest degree ["in summo"]. For she ...was full of charity and love: charity toward God, love toward her neighbor -- And so she joined together three supreme things, and so made one supreme thing of them; which no other creature has ever been able to do. Any other creature, loving her son and loving God, loves her son by one love, if it is natural, and loves God by another; only this mother of God had the same love for her God which she had for her Son, for her Son was her God.<sup>882</sup>

It would be a great thing in itself to be a virgin and the mother of a very holy man; it would be infinitely greater in itself to be the Mother of God; greater than either and therefore the greatest, is to be the mother of the holiest man and of God; this is situated in the highest order.<sup>883</sup>

<sup>878</sup> Bonaventure, *Comm. Evg. Lc.*, c. 11, n. 62; VII, p. 297; Chietini 39, n. 35.

<sup>879</sup> Bonaventure, *Comm. Evg. Lc.*, c. 10, n. 76; VII, p. 276.

<sup>880</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V. sermo* 6; IX, p. 704.

<sup>881</sup> St. Bonaventure strongly held a true marriage between Mary and Joseph. "We cannot deny that there was a true marriage between Mary and Joseph, since the Gospel says this and all the saints agree." Bonaventure, *IV Sent.*, d. 28, a. 1, q. 6, ad 5; IV, p. 697. Our Lady *did* have a husband but here, in a homily, not an academic paper, the Saint is emphasizing the centering of her love on Christ.

<sup>882</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, sermo 6; IX, p. 704; Chietini. 40, n. 38.

<sup>883</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V.*, sermo 6; IX, p.706; Chietini, 40.

St. John Damascene says, "The honor of the mother goes to [refertur] the Son.<sup>884</sup> St. Bonaventure says the same<sup>885</sup>) So also the honor of the Son redounds to the praise of the mother.<sup>886</sup> Chietтини says, "Perhaps in this sense are the words to be understood by which St. Bonaventure tries to meet the objection which is taken from the silence of Scripture about Mary:

Marvelous things are said of her in Scripture, because in all the Scriptures she is reported in relation to her Son ["refertur in relatione ad Filium"]. And that which some say -- "Why is so little said about the Blessed Virgin? -- is nothing, because many things are said since they are said everywhere about her and it is more to speak of her everywhere, than if one treatise ["tractatus"] were made."<sup>887</sup>

### Accompanying Graces and Gifts

If the Divine Maternity were considered apart from the grace and gifts accompanying it, it would seem to be unintelligible. Bonaventure seems to say as much when he states that, besides her gifts of nature and grace, as Mother of God, than which nothing more noble can be thought of, and as mother of the most noble Son, Mary has such goodness and dignity that no other woman could have more. All creatures, no matter how high their degree of nobility, owe reverence to the Mother of God.<sup>888</sup>

Protestants, to reduce the dignity of the Divine Maternity, appeal to the words of Christ to the "Enthusiastic Woman" who praised his mother. Our saint's answer to this is: "[Christ] said this, not in contradiction but in addition, as if to say: not only is the womb blessed which bore me, the Word made flesh, but even more blessed is she who received the word uttered by me."<sup>889</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor saw such a close link between the Divine Maternity and Mary's other graces and privileges that to separate them seemed to him self-contradictory. More than once, he compared her to the House of David. Since the true David, Christ, was to enter it, it was blessed eternally with an abundance of graces and privileges.<sup>890</sup> He referred to Mary the words of the psalm, "Domum tuam, Domine, decet sanctitudo in longitudinem dierum."<sup>891</sup> He also saw her in the words of the Liturgy, "Cunctas haereses interemisti in

<sup>884</sup> *De fide orthodox.*, l. 4, c. 16; PG 94, 1171.

<sup>885</sup> *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2; III, p. 65; *ibid.*, ad 2; III, p. 68.

<sup>886</sup> Chietтини, p. 41, n. 39.

<sup>887</sup> Bonaventure, *In Hexaem.*, coll. 13, n. 20; V, p. 391; Chietтини 40, n. 39.

<sup>888</sup> Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, d. 44, ; I, pp. 793f; Chietтини 40-1, n. 40.

<sup>889</sup> Bonaventure, *Comm. Evgl. Lc.*, c. 11, n. 62; VII, p. 297; cf. *ibid.*, c. 10, n. 76; VII, p. 276; *De Donis Spiritus sancti*, coll. 6, n. 7: V, pp. 484f.

<sup>890</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M. V.*, sermo 6: IX, p. 683.

<sup>891</sup> Bonaventure, *De Ann. B.M. V.*, sermo 5: IX, p. 678.

universo mundo," saying of her, "Ipsa enim cunctas hereses interemit in universo mundo, *Veritatem* ex seipsa concipiendo et pariendo."<sup>892</sup> [Liturgy: "Thou hast destroyed all heresies in the whole world." Bonaventure: "For she has destroyed all heresies in the whole world by conceiving and bearing *Truth* from herself."]

### For Mary, Not Latria But Hyperdulia

The Mother of Christ does not merit the honor of latria. "The most Blessed Virgin Mary is a pure creature; and therefore does not ascend to the cult of latria."<sup>893</sup> Nor is it valid to object that the cross is honored with latria although it is inferior to her. "The mother of Christ has a right to her own honor, since she has the power of reason: therefore, when we honor her, we speak to the Virgin and desire to obtain her good will. It is not so with the cross. When we honor it, we intend to please the Crucified One and not his sign."<sup>894</sup>

But since she is the greatest of creatures, she deserves, not just dulia but hyperdulia.<sup>895</sup>

### A Particular Consequence: The Assumption Of Our Lady

#### St. Thomas on the Assumption

St. Thomas Aquinas clearly asserted the privilege of the Assumption. The faith of the Angelic Doctor included the death, resurrection and heavenly exaltation of the Virgin. His arguments are based on Scripture, on Tradition, on theological reason, and on the faith of the universal Church. He held the Assumption not by a mere pious adherence or as a theological certitude. He held it by an act of divine and catholic faith, based on the authority of the Catholic Church.<sup>896</sup> "As for his teacher, Albert the Great, so for St. Thomas, the *principal* and *decisive* argument, that is, on which he founds his own "constant and absolute" faith in the Assumption of Mary to heaven, is the faith of the

<sup>892</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 4, a. 3, q. 3; III, p. 115. Cf. H. Barré, "Marie et l'Eglise, a Venerable Bede a Saint Albert le Grand," *Etudes Mariales: Bulletin de la Société Française d'Etudes Mariales* 9 (1951), p. 101; L. Brou, "Marie, destructrice de toutes les heresies," *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 42(1948), pp. 321ff.

<sup>893</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 9, a. 1, q. 3, c.: III, p. 206.

<sup>894</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 9, a. 1, q. 4, ad 2: III, p. 208.

<sup>895</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 9, a. 1, q. 4, c.: III, p. 206.

<sup>896</sup> L. Ciappi, "Il pensiero di S. Tommaso d'Aquino sull'Assunzione corporea di Maria Ss. Al cielo alla luce della Costituzione dogmatica 'Munificentissimus Deus,'" (Roma: *Edizioni "Marianum,"* 1952), p. 5.

universal Church, manifesting itself especially through the liturgy and sacred preaching."<sup>897</sup>

St. Albert the Great emphasized the witness of the Gregorian Sacramentary, to show his own faith was in complete agreement with that of the whole Church.<sup>898</sup> The unshakeable belief of St. Thomas in the bodily exaltation of Our Lady was not disturbed by the uncertain posture of Pseudo-Jerome, nor did it find its principal support in apocryphal writings, in spite of at least one distinguished historian.<sup>899</sup> The "faith of the Church" and above all that of the *Roman Church*, was always for the Angelic [Doctor — L. Gl.] the supreme rule and the infallible, decisive criterion of the divine origin of every catholic truth."<sup>900</sup>

For the Common Doctor, this teaching is contained in the documents of faith both virtually, implicitly and formally. He held that Mary merited the Assumption *de congruo*. This agrees with the teachings of Pius XII's *Munificentissimus Deus*.

#### St. Bonaventure on the Assumption

The raising of Mary to heaven, in soul and also in body, at the end of her earthly life, defined in 1950 by Pius XII, was held firmly by St. Bonaventure. It is a doctrine that, primarily, tells us about Mary. But like everything in her life, it speaks of the call of the whole Church to life in Christ. Healy says the Assumption is "Christ's complete victory over sin and death, and ...the beginning of the glorification of the Church, the final destiny of all the friends of God."<sup>901</sup> As background to his commentary on the Seraphic Doctor, Tavard explains:

...Mary's Assumption into heaven after she died (for, being subject to the conditions of humanity, she must, like her Son, have died) should not be seen as a miraculous happening special to her: it embodies the destiny of the *Ecclesia*, and of all the faithful, to be taken, after death, into another mode of existence, in God. The doctrines [of the Assumption and Immaculate Conception — L. Gl.] are icons, images of the ultimate reality present in Christ, windows into the heart of things, or projections of the *Ecclesia*. The Church is the primary category, and

<sup>897</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>898</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>899</sup> : "St. Thomas, in holding the belief in the bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, was deceived by apocryphal sayings." N. Alexander, *Historia Ecclesiastica Veteris Novique Testamenti*, ed. Roncaglia-Mansi: t. 3, saec. 2, cap. 4, single par.; Venice, 1778, p. 287b; cited [and called "grande storico"] Ciappi, *ibid.* p. 27.

<sup>900</sup> Ibid.

<sup>901</sup> K. Healy, *The Assumption of Mary* (Willmington DE: Michael Glazier Inc., 1982) p. 151.

the all-encompassing context in which Mary is placed as the most central specific creaturely image, pointing to the divine Word.<sup>902</sup>

The Church has not defined that Mary died. But Father Tavad is certainly in order in following the teaching of his subject, the Seraphic Doctor (and of the Angelic). The concept of Mary as the central sign of the Word is worthy of a dissertation in itself.

Tavad warns that St. Bonaventure's words on the Assumption are found only in his sermons. "But it holds no major place, in fact hardly any place at all, at the level of his systematic theology as formulated in the *Commentary on the Sentences*." As an explanation, he adds, "The corresponding doctrine was already in quiet possession in the Catholic Church. It was of course, at the time, a point of piety rather than of formal theology since it had not yet been formulated officially in any definitive way."<sup>903</sup> Later in *The Forthbringer of God*, Tavad suggests the Saint believed less strongly in the Assumption: "...Very little stress was then placed on Mary's being assumed into heaven body and soul after her death. When this was stated, it was called only a pious belief."<sup>904</sup>

The quotation Tavad uses does say "piously believed," but not *only* a pious belief: "She overflowed with these joys ...not only in her soul, but also in her own body, which is piously believed and proven to have been glorified in the assumption of her soul."<sup>905</sup> The saint says, "And proven." Elsewhere, in three sermons on the Assumption and one on the Nativity, he speaks more strongly:

...It can be certain that she is there bodily ...this mode of perfection would not be present unless she were there in body.... She is said to *lean upon her beloved* and to be *overflowing with delights* because of her consummate beatitude; and her blessedness would not be consummated unless she were personally there, and the person is not the soul, but the conjunction: it is clear that she is there in the conjunction, that is, body and soul.<sup>906</sup>

It is rare that a font is turned into a lamp, nor is it the way of nature that a body formed of elements be converted into a heavenly one, but [the way] of grace in the glorification of the Virgin.<sup>907</sup>

<sup>902</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 187.

<sup>903</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 45f.

<sup>904</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 122.

<sup>905</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 124; "... Corpus proprium quod pie glorificatum in assumptione animae esse creditur et probatur." Bonaventure, *Sermo de Assumptione B.V.M.*, 2, no. 2; IX, p. 692.

<sup>906</sup> Bonaventure, *Sermo de Assumptione B.V.M.*, 1, no. 2; IX, p. 690. ...Constare potest quod corporaliter illic est ...hic modus perfectionis non ibi esset, nisi corporaliter ibi esset.... Dicitur *innixa super dilectum suum et deliciis affluens* propter consummatam eius beatitudinem; et beatitudo non esset consummata, nisi personaliter ibi esset, et persona non sit anima, sed conjunctum: patet, quod secundum coniunctum, id est corpus et animam, ibi est.

<sup>907</sup> Bonaventure, *Sermo de Assumptione B.V.M.*, 4, no. 3; IX, p. 698. Rarum est, quod fons convertatur in lucerna, nec est via naturae, quod corpus elementare convertatur in caeleste, sed

He ought to have crowned her, not only in spirit, but also in the robe of the body.<sup>908</sup> But the glorious Virgin Mary, just as she was not corrupted by the defilement of actual concupiscence in living and conceiving, in dying and expiring was not corrupted by the penalty of turning to ashes or of worms.<sup>909</sup>

These testimonies are sparse but, as Tavad tells us, "the homilies on the Assumption insist on the spiritual, not on the corporal, dimension of the feast."<sup>910</sup> That is, the Saint concentrated on the glorification of the *person* of Our Lady, not precisely that her person was completed by the presence of her material *body*.

St. Bonaventure's known conservatism would incline him to follow the common teaching and the Assumption of Our Lady was believed by Catholics in general. Tavad says, "The corresponding doctrine [of the Assumption: L. Gl.] was already in quiet possession in the Catholic Church."<sup>911</sup> It was attested to by St. John Damascene, "the great Doctor of the Assumption,"<sup>912</sup> and earlier by St. Germanus of Constantinople (d. 733), Modestus of Jerusalem (d. 634), and, the earliest known, Theoteknos of Livias, who said, in a homily: "It was fitting that the most holy body of Mary, God-bearing body, receptacle of God, divinized, incorruptible, illuminated by divine grace and full of glory ...should be entrusted to the earth for a little while and raised up to heaven in glory, with her soul pleasing to God."<sup>913</sup>

The doctrine of the Assumption had some difficulties, owing to a letter attributed to St. Jerome and published in the ninth century. But, Jelly says: "By the middle of the thirteenth century, devotion to Our Lady of the Assumption regained its strength. It was supported in the liturgy and by the teaching of the great Doctors, especially Sts. Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, and Bonaventure."<sup>914</sup>

It seems that the Saint held to the Assumption very firmly, although, perhaps, in a devotional way rather than in his academic theology. "It [the Assumption: L. Gl.] was of course, at the time, a point of piety rather than of

gratiae in Virginis glorificatione.

<sup>908</sup> Bonaventure, *Sermo de Assumptione B.V.M.*, 5, n. 2; IX, p. 700. ...Eam debuerit coronare non tantum spiritu, sed etiam stola corporis..."

<sup>909</sup> Bonaventure, *Sermo de Nativitate B.V.M.*, 2, no. 1; IX, p. 715. Sed gloriosa Virgo Maria, sicut vivendo et concipiendo non putruit per corruptelam concupiscentiae actualis; sic moriendo et expirando non putruit per poenam incinerationis et vermis.

<sup>910</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 124.

<sup>911</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 45.

<sup>912</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, p. 123.

<sup>913</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, p. 123.

<sup>914</sup> *Madonna*, p. 124; K. Healy, *The Assumption of Mary* (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1982, pp. 58f.; "Assumption," in *Theotokos*.

formal theology since it had not yet been formulated officially in any definitive way."<sup>915</sup>

The earliest testimony to the Assumption comes from the Fathers of the sixth century, according to Chiettni.<sup>916</sup> Jelly tells us that in the fifth century the Christians of the East were celebrating on August 15, a feast called the "Memorial" of Mary, which came to be called her Dormition. Rome celebrated the feast in the seventh century and, in the eighth, changed the name to the Assumption.<sup>917</sup> Chiettni says the conviction of the fittingness of this doctrine struck deep roots in the souls of the faithful, that the virginal and immaculate dwelling place of the Incarnate Word should be immune from the corruption of the grave and should be taken to heaven soon after death.<sup>918</sup> The privilege did not have the adversaries the Immaculate Conception did. As Fr. Eamon Carroll, O. Carm., puts it, "Historically, the Assumption ran a smoother course than the Immaculate Conception."<sup>919</sup> By the Middle Ages, it was accepted without controversy.<sup>920</sup> The Seraphic Doctor was not behind in this. In his sermons he asserted the truth of the Assumption and described it exquisitely.

The Assumption was defined by Pius XII: "...the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory."<sup>921</sup> This leaves open the question whether Mary died. Chiettni asserts that Mary died, although he admits some deny or doubt this.<sup>922</sup>

Pius XII, in the Apostolic Constitution, *Munificentissimus Deus*,<sup>923</sup> defining the dogma of the Assumption, said, "Following the footsteps of his distinguished teacher<sup>924</sup>, the Angelic Doctor, despite the fact that he never dealt directly with this question, nevertheless, whenever he touched upon it, always held together with the Catholic Church, that Mary's body had been assumed into heaven along with her soul."

<sup>915</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 45f.

<sup>916</sup> Chiettni, p. 182. Cf. Stamm, Juergens, Janssens.

<sup>917</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, 121-2.

<sup>918</sup> Chiettni, p.182.

<sup>919</sup> E. Carroll, "Papal infallibility and the Marian definitions. Some consideration," *Carmelus*, 26(1979) 227; Jelly, *Madonna*, 121.

<sup>920</sup> Chiettni 182.

<sup>921</sup> Pius XII, Apostolic Constitution, *Munificentissimus* (Denziger 33, no. 3903 in *The teaching of the Catholic Church*, K. Rahner, ed. (Staten Island: Alba House, 1967), p. 196.

<sup>922</sup> 183; Jelly, *Madonna*, 127-8.

<sup>923</sup> Nov. 1, 1950.

<sup>924</sup> St. Albert the Great.

St. Bonaventure held she died: "The Virgin had the necessity of suffering and dying."<sup>925</sup> He concluded to this from original sin, which he held she had, "If the Blessed Virgin lacked original sin, she lacked the merit of death,"<sup>926</sup> and from the superiority of her Son, "It was not fitting for the Son of God to have an immortal mother, since he himself was mortal."<sup>927</sup>

But, though she died, as do we all, her body remained integral and incorrupt, fittingly for one free of all concupiscence: "As the glorious Virgin Mary, in living and conceiving did not become decayed by the seduction of actual concupiscence, so in dying and expiring, did not corrupt by the punishment of turning to ashes and of worms; and this was most fitting for the unblemished and incorrupt virginal womb."<sup>928</sup>

There are two distinct doctrines; the incorruption of the body and the Assumption.<sup>929</sup> St. Bonaventure taught both, the incorruption and the Assumption: Mary is in heaven "in the joining of body and soul"<sup>930</sup> She is crowned, "...not only in spirit but also by the garment of the body."<sup>931</sup> The "stola" or garment of the body is, for the Seraphic Doctor, "...the fourfold gift of agility, clarity, subtlety, and impassibility."<sup>932</sup> The reasons for this privilege are, first the supreme happiness of Mary in heaven. Her "...beatitudo would not be complete unless she were there personally," that is, "in the joining of body and soul."<sup>933</sup> In this he follows St. Augustine.<sup>934</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor holds another special reason for the Assumption. The perfection of heaven comes about, for him, through a certain "conversion," through which the blessed are borne toward their Creator. Christ, the Blessed Mother, and others, all have this conversion but in a different way. In Christ, the conversion comes about: "as of a supposit to a subject in the identity of the person [ut suppositi in subiectum in identitate personae]." In Mary, as: "of one originating toward the originated, as of a mother toward a son [originantis in originatum, ut est matris in filium]." Others are converted toward God as "originated toward the original." The Blessed Virgin has a special kind of con-

<sup>925</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V. sermo 5*; IX, p.715.

<sup>926</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, ad 4; III, p.66.

<sup>927</sup> Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 15, a. 2, q. 3, ad 3; III, p. 78.

<sup>928</sup> Bonaventure, *De Nat. B.M.V., sermo 5*; IX, p. 715.

<sup>929</sup> Chietini, p. 184.

<sup>930</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V., sermo 1*; IX, p. 690. "secundum conjunctum, id est, corpus et animam".

<sup>931</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V., sermo 5*; IX, p. 700.

<sup>932</sup> Bonaventure, *De Pent. sermo 1*; IX, p. 333.

<sup>933</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V., sermo 1*; IX, p. 690.

<sup>934</sup> *De Genesi ad litteram*, l. 12, c. 35, n. 68; PL 34, 483; Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V., sermo 1*; IX, p. 690.



version which: "brings a special mode of perfection to the heavenly city." This would not happen if she were not in heaven bodily, because she is: "originating according to the body, since the soul of Christ was not from her soul, since it is not from a graft [tradux], but the body is from the body."<sup>935</sup>

Bonaventure mentions the Assumption in interpreting Psalm 21: "You have placed on his [the king's] head a crown made from a precious stone."<sup>936</sup> The Seraphic Doctor says the precious stone stands for Christ, who is Mary's crown. (The Douay plural "from precious stones," makes his interpretation more difficult. The Vulgate uses the singular, "a precious stone.") "From this we can gather that he ought to crown her not just in spirit but also with the garment ["stola"] of the body."<sup>937</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor speaks of crowning in the sixth *Collatio de Donis Sancti Spiritus*, strongly suggesting the Assumption, without using that word. Tavard tells us:

There was ...for the Virgin, ...a crowning with the stone which was Christ. The first crowning, however, was for Christ himself as he entered the heavens through his Resurrection and Ascension. The second crowning was for her: First Christ was crowned, and, after him, she was."<sup>938</sup> [...The word, assumption, is not used at this point. Yet the Virgin's glorification through Christ corresponds to what the feast of her Assumption was meant to celebrate. What Bonaventure now envisions is a glorification, an assumption of the whole Church through Christ. Mary, in her own glorification, is not the instrument of it but she remains a model for it. And this model has a message for all who believe: "We shall have this crown, if we want to imitate the glorious Virgin."<sup>939</sup>]

St. Bonaventure never quotes an authority from tradition in support of the Assumption, according to Chietini, who attributes this to his close following of St. Bernard, who never expressly affirms this privilege and to the practice of medieval authors who believe in the Assumption but did not preach it.<sup>940</sup>

What theological note would St. Bonaventure attach to the doctrine of the Assumption? He says, it is "piously believed." Chietini says he held it as quite

<sup>935</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V., sermo 1*; IX, p. 690.

<sup>936</sup> Vulgate. Turin: Marietti, 1959. Ps 20, 4b. "Posuisti in capite eius coronam de lapide pretioso." My translation. Douay: "Thou hast set on his head a crown of precious stones." (Baltimore: J. Murphy Co., 1914) Ps. 20: 4b. New American Bible: "You placed on his head a crown of pure gold. (New York: P.J. Kennedy, 1970) Ps. 21, 4b.

<sup>937</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumpt. B.M.V., sermo 5*; IX, p. 700.

<sup>938</sup> "Coronatus est primo Christus, et ipsa post." Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 24; V, p. 488.

<sup>939</sup> "Istam coronam habebimus, si volumus Virginem gloriosam imitari." Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 24; V, p. 489; Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 179.

<sup>940</sup> Chietini, p. 187.

certain ["veritatem satis certam"], supported by arguments of congruity and the authority of Scripture.<sup>941</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor, unlike the Angelic, believed the Assumption of Mary to be unique. There was for some time a widespread opinion that John the Apostle had been assumed to heaven. St. Thomas did not reject this opinion, as he says here:

The resurrection of others is put off until the end of the world, unless it is conceded beforehand to some as a privilege, as to the Blessed Virgin and, as is piously believed, to blessed John the Evangelist.<sup>942</sup>

The body of the Lord has three forms ("Triforme est...). The part offered in the chalice of the Mass shows the body of Christ which has already risen: viz., Christ himself and the Blessed Virgin, and other saints, if there are any who are in glory with their bodies.<sup>943</sup>

But the resurrection of some noble members ...was not delayed until the end of the world but followed immediately the resurrection of Christ, as is piously believed about the Blessed Virgin and John the Evangelist.

As to the second ...that it was conceded to some that their resurrection was not delayed until the common resurrection, is from a special privilege of grace.<sup>944</sup>

St. Bonaventure rejected this opinion as unfounded:

There is an opinion that the Lord assumed him [John the Evangelist] in body and soul and that in that assumption he died and lived again. Although this opinion cannot be condemned in the same way [as an opinion about St. John sleeping under the earth. Bonaventure called this "improbabilis" (unprovable?) L. Gl.], since it has no authority, it can be despised with the same facility with which it is proven.<sup>945</sup>

Rev. Ignatius C. Brady, O.F.M., published "The relation between sin and death according to mediaeval theologians."<sup>946</sup> The following is drawn from that article.

<sup>941</sup> Chiettoni, p.188.

<sup>942</sup> Aquinas, *Expositio super symbolum apostolorum*; ed. Venetiis, 1593; XVII, p. 68b.

<sup>943</sup> Aquinas, III, 83, 5, ad 8.

<sup>944</sup> Aquinas, Supplement to Part III, 77, 1.

<sup>945</sup> He says of this teaching: "probatur;" Bonaventure, *Comm. Evgl. Joan.*, c. 21, n. 53 ; VI, p.529. Alia est opinio, quod Dominus ipsum assumpsit in corpore et anima, et in illa assumptione obiit et revixit. – Etsi ista opinio non possit ita reprobari, tamen, quia non habet auctoritatem, eadem facilitate contemnitur, qua probatur.

<sup>946</sup> *Proceedings of the First Franciscan Marian Conference in Acclamation of the Dogma of the Assumption, Oct. 8-11, 1950*, pp. 51-80. It was condensed and re-printed in *Theology Digest*; 2 (1954) pp. 10-14, under the title, "Mary's Assumption and Medieval Theologians on Sin and Death." I have been unable to find the original. Footnotes here refer to *Theology Digest*.

Pelagians held death was a condition of nature, not a penalty for sin. Both the Council of Carthage<sup>947</sup> and the second Council of Orange<sup>948</sup> held Adam received immortality as a gift from God, that death resulted from sin, as its punishment. St. Augustine believed original sin consisted essentially in concupiscence and was passed on through the body. While in the state of innocence, our first parents were both mortal, in that they could die, death was intrinsically possible, and also immortal, in that they could avoid death, it could be prevented. Immortality did not follow necessarily either from his nature, nor from original justice. It came from their use of the tree of life. Death was the result only of sin.

All this implies that Mary would be subject to death, unless she had access to the tree of life [or its equivalent-L. Gl.]. Her subjection to death would not be a consequence of sin and St. Augustine did hold she was mortal, even though without any personal sin.

The "Summa fratris Alexandri" changed this teaching on the tree of life, saying it was not the whole cause nor the intrinsic cause of the immortality of Adam and Eve. It healed the body of damage by external agents. The cause of immortality is in a power of the soul, given in the state of innocence, the power to sustain the body in unending life. This idea had come from St. Anselm.

St. Anselm changed the emphasis from the body to the soul. He defined original sin as the privation of the original justice due to man, of the original gift of rightness of will. He called it "original," or "natural," because it was in God's first plan for humans. Adam's sin lost this for him and us. We come into existence lacking original justice. Precisely this privation of justice, which we ought to have had, is, for St. Anselm, the essence of original sin. This absence reacts on the body, making it subject to concupiscence and corruption.

While the first Dominicans, except John of Saint-Gilles, followed the earlier Augustinian tradition, the Paris Franciscans combined Augustine and Anselm, reconciling the two views of original sin. Alexander of Hales said there was an aversion from God and a conversion to creatures in Adam's sin, as there is in every sin. His turning from God lost original justice; his turning to creatures brought concupiscence. The loss of justice has more the nature of sin. Concupiscence has more of the nature of punishment and consequently is found even after original sin is removed by baptism.

These early Franciscans concluded that original justice was of the "natural", not the supernatural, order. It would have been handed down to his de-

<sup>947</sup> In year 418 A.D .

<sup>948</sup> In year 529 A.D.

scendants. But no one can thus hand on supernatural justice. For them, therefore original justice was "natural." (Today we would call it "preternatural.")

In his early *Exposition on the Sentences*, St. Thomas agreed with the early Franciscans and St. Bonaventure that original justice was a natural gift.

But this justice was according to the due order<sup>949</sup> of the body under the soul and of the lower powers under the higher one and of the higher one under God. And this justice set in order human nature itself in its first beginning from the divine gift; and therefore he [Adam. L. Gl.] would have transmitted this justice to his children.<sup>950</sup>

Later on, in his *Summa theologiae*, he disagreed with the Franciscans, saying original justice was not natural.

...That subjection of the body to the soul and of the lower powers to reason, was not natural: otherwise it would have remained after sin. That first subjection, by which reason was placed under God was not only according to nature but according to the supernatural gift of grace.<sup>951</sup>

Fr. Brady is unable to trace this doctrine in its development to the identification of original justice with the soul's power of keeping the body alive without end. Possibly St. Albert the Great made that identification. In any case, the early Franciscans explicitly taught that this "containing" power in the soul was the intrinsic cause of Adam's immortality and that death, a punishment, comes from the loss of original justice and of the soul's power over the body's life. However, as Brady says, "But this power is nowhere explicitly identified with original justice. It appears more as an effect thereof."<sup>952</sup>

St. Bonaventure generally holds to the teaching of the earlier Franciscans on sin and death but makes some changes. He distinguishes the creation of man from the gift of original justice and that, from sanctifying grace. Creation, giving man the image of God in his soul, gives no more than the capacity for conversion to God. In Adam, this potentiality was actuated by original justice. This brought about conversion to God and was a preparation for sanctifying

<sup>949</sup> "Due order" is equivalent to "natural." That which is due or ordered to nature is natural, not supernatural. L. Gl. ". . . Illud dicitur esse naturale rei, quod convenit ei secundum suam substantiam. [: That is said to be natural to a thing which is suitable to it according to its substance.] Aquinas, I-II, q. 10, a. 1, c.

<sup>950</sup> Aquinas, *In II Sent.*, d. 20, q. 2, a. 3, c. et ad 3. Haec autem iustitia erat secundum debitum ordinem corporis sub anima et inferiorum virium sub superiori, et superioris sub Deo, et haec quidem iustitia ipsam naturam humanam ordinabat in sui primordio ex divino munere; et ideo talem iustitiam in filios transfudisset

<sup>951</sup> Aquinas, I, q. 95, 1, c. ...Illa subiectio corporis ad animam et inferiorum virium ad rationem, non erat naturalis: alioquin post peccatum mansisset.... Illa prima subiectio, qua ratio Deo subdebatur non erat solum secundum naturam, sed secundum supernaturale donum gratiae.

<sup>952</sup> Brady, p. 12.

grace. By creation itself, man is neither mortal nor immortal. Apart from original justice, Adam's body was indifferent. It was not necessarily mortal or immortal. The harmony of body and soul and the well-balanced elements in the body gave it an aptitude for immortality. The body's composition from several elements gave it a natural potency to death and corruption.

God added to nature original or natural justice. This actualized the body's potency for immortality and kept the opposite tendency, to corruption, from actualization.<sup>953</sup> Justice, inhering in the *liberum arbitrium* [power of "free choice"], was the principal cause of immortality, by conferring on the soul the power to rule the body and to keep everything in proper order to God. Then, a while later, the greater privilege of sanctifying grace was added to created nature and original justice.<sup>954</sup>

Adam's sin cost him both original justice and grace. The loss of original justice meant the soul was unable to hold the body in everlasting life. The opposite tendency of the body, to corruption and death, was actualized. He, and we, were now subject to death.<sup>955</sup> A basic potency for death is natural to us. For the Seraphic Doctor, however, death itself is not natural but is a punishment. It is not demanded either by human nature or by the union of soul and body. Nature desires their permanent union. Both elements naturally tend to resist separation. If not for sin and the consequent loss of justice, the soul would always be united to the body. It was created thus. This permanent union, however, would not be by its natural power.

Union with the soul gives the body the possibility of immortality. Even now, the temporary union with the soul sows the seeds of everlasting life, which will bloom on the last day. Resurrection will fulfill God's original intention of permanent oneness.<sup>956</sup>

The learned Franciscan makes no express application of these principles to Mary. Brady tells us, "In fact, apart from one reference to her death, his Marian sermons, especially on the Assumption, point rather to her immortality!"<sup>957</sup> It almost seems that he believed she had some kind of original justice, at least after the Incarnation. Some say that, had Bonaventure held the Immaculate Conception, he would probably have held Our Lady was immortal.<sup>958</sup> Brady tells us they have a strong case, based on his concepts of nature, of justice, and of grace.

<sup>953</sup> Brady, p. 12.

<sup>954</sup> Brady, p. 12.

<sup>955</sup> Brady, p. 12.

<sup>956</sup> Brady, pp. 12f.

<sup>957</sup> Brady, p. 13.

<sup>958</sup> Brady, p. 13.

An argument for Mary's mortality comes from the Saint's doctrine on Christ's human nature. Christ could suffer, both in body and in soul, because, in the moment of its creation, his human soul consented to be united to a passible body. Consequently, he held a place between us and our first parents. In them, suffering was subject to their nature and will. Our nature and will are both subject to suffering. Christ's human nature was subject to suffering. But not his will.<sup>959</sup> A later author concludes from this that Our Lord did not, from his free choice, have original justice. He was subject to death, if not from violence, then, eventually, from old age.<sup>960</sup>

The Immaculate Conception is an effect of the foreseen merits of her Son. But no effect can surpass its cause. If Christ had no original justice, neither could Mary. And thus she had no immortality. She had to die. Brady says, "This argument provides a more legitimate conclusion than the argument for immortality."<sup>961</sup>

In this area of sin and death, St. Thomas Aquinas differs from the Franciscans perhaps most greatly in his position on human mortality. He sees no inclination to immortality in Adam's nature. The material composition of the body is the root of corruptibility. Death, is therefore, natural. Then, how can it be a punishment? The Angelic Doctor distinguishes: the immediate punishment of the original sin is the loss of justice and grace. Corruptibility, sickness and death are mediate punishments.

St. Thomas believed all who had original sin are subject to the penalty of death and did not believe in the Immaculate Conception. He held Mary had to die. Every human body, even Christ's is composed of contraries. For such bodies, death is natural. Brady's conclusion: "I should judge, all things considered, that even granted the Immaculate Conception, Saint Thomas would not have concluded to the immortality of Our Lady."<sup>962</sup>

A later Franciscan, Matthew of Aquasparta, held Christ would have died somehow, even if he had not been executed. The principles he used show he would not have taught Mary was immortal. In fact, he says her death was the consequence of human nature, even though he held the Assumption. Brady ends his article: "The only legitimate conclusion we may draw from our survey is that if mediaeval theologians had been asked directly whether Mary was mortal

<sup>959</sup> Brady, p. 13.

<sup>960</sup> Brady, p. 13.

<sup>961</sup> Brady, p. 13.

<sup>962</sup> Brady, pp. 13f.

or immortal, they would assuredly have held her mortality and actual death, as well as her glorious Assumption within a short time after her demise.”<sup>963</sup>

### A Dramatic Description of the Assumption

Bonaventure says God came to meet Our Lady at her Assumption. Tavad relates this to the spousal relation:

The theme of the God-given beauty of the Virgin is harmoniously prolonged in that of her being God's very special spouse...This dimension of God's relation to Mary explains Bonaventure's bold language when, in what must be his most adventurous "paraboli cal similitude," he describes God's coming out toward the Virgin in her Assumption, accompanied by all the heavenly court. Angels, patriarchs, apostles, martyrs are there, along with married and widowed women. Her own sisters hasten to see "their prelate and abbess." The entire Trinity approaches, "even though not locally, yet in favorable influence, highest joy and deiform glory":

The entire blessed Trinity has known you, Mary, as bride of chaste love, palace of holy dwelling, instrument of wondrous deed. Or let us say, with distinctions: the Father has known the blessed Mary as the house of his majesty, ...The Son has recognized her as the principle of his humanity or humility. The Holy Spirit has recognized her as the repository of his goodness...<sup>964</sup>

Confluent consorores videre praelatam et abbatissam suam, . . .Tota siquidem beata Trinitas te cognovit, Maria, sponsa castae dilectionis, aulam sanctae habitationis, officinam mirae operationis. Vel distinctive dicamus: Cognovit beatam Mariam Pater domum suae maiestatis, ...recognovit Filius principium suae humanitatis sive humilitatis; recognovit Spiritus sanctus sacrarium suae bonitatis...<sup>965</sup>

The Consequences of the Maternal Relation for Others, according to St. Bonaventure

### Mediatrice of All Graces

Roschini says St. Bonaventure can justly be called, after St. Albert the Great, the greatest medieval doctor of Marian mediation.<sup>966</sup> Perhaps unfortunately, the Saint bases his doctrine of mediation on a division no longer in favor, at least among theologians, although formerly taken by many as eternal truth, the division between God's justice and his mercy. After enumerating five divisions in which Mary obtained the better part, he says:

<sup>963</sup> Brady, p.14. See Scholion: "Death as punishment for original sin," above, Part 2, Chap. 1, II, B,4, b,ii.

<sup>964</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, pp. 137ff

<sup>965</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumptione(sic) B.V.M., Sermo III*; IX, p. 693f.

<sup>966</sup> Roschini, "Bonaventura sulla Mediazione," p. 12.

She made a sixth division with her Son, with whom she divided the kingdom of heaven, whose two parts were justice and mercy. The Blessed Virgin chose the better part for herself, because she became the queen of mercy and her Son remained king of justice: and mercy is better than justice, because "mercy triumphs over judgment [James 2:13]."<sup>967</sup> And "his mercy is above all his works [Ps 144/145, 9]."<sup>239</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor does not explicitly say that Christ gave up all his mercy to Mary and became merciless. He probably meant that Our Lord retains ownership of all his mercy but exercises it through his Mother. I do not believe he held that Our Lord is merciless! St. Bonaventure does not say that but does say he gave up all his mercy. To give it away, even to his mother, would deprive him of a necessary attribute of his divinity and a most appropriate attribute of his human nature. Perhaps the saint here uses a rhetorical device, open to some legitimate criticism.

F. M. Jelly, O.P. has often tried to clarify Our Lady's mediating role. He says:

"Confusion about Mary's role has not only been the cause of much misunderstanding between Catholics and other Christians but ...has for some obscured the most important meaning of the Incarnation ...that God ...in Jesus Christ ...is intimately present to each of us..."<sup>969</sup>

The U. S. Bishops say, in *Behold Your Mother*:

"Father Jelly writes: 'Mary is not a bridge over the gap that separates us from a remote Christ...Mary's greatness is that she brought him close to us, and her mediation continues to create the spiritual climate for our immediate encounter with Christ.'<sup>970</sup>"

In his *Madonna*, Jelly says:

Mary's intercessory and mediating role in glory is not to make God approachable to us, but to help make us more aware of the abiding presence of the triune God in and through Christ. She is like a loving mother with a son who can help others if only they really believe in him. And so she prepares a meeting where they can come to see and hear him, knowing just how to make her home pleasant for the

<sup>967</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumptione B. Virginis Mariae*, Sermo 6; IX, p. 703. Sextam divisionem fecit cum Filio, cum quo divisit regnum caelorum, cuius duae erant partes, iustitia et misericordia. Beata Virgo optimam sibi elegit, quia facta est regina misericordiae, et Filius eius remansit rex iustitiae: et melior misericordia quam iustitia, "quia superexaltat misericordia iudicium [Iac. 2, 13]," et "misericordia eius super omnia opera eius. Transl. RSV.

<sup>968</sup> Anchor Bible: "...his compassion is upon all his works [Ps. 145, 9]." *Jerus. Bible*, "Yahweh's tenderness embraces all his creatures."

<sup>969</sup> Jelly, chapter "Mary, mother and model of the Church," in Wuerl et al. "The Teaching of Christ," p. 203.

<sup>970</sup> U. S. Bishops, *Behold Your Mother*, p. 26



meeting. She does not stand between them and her son, but stays in the background always ready to serve.<sup>971</sup>

In ordinary language "mediation" always implies an existing distance of some sort. Mary's mediation begins from no such distance, except perhaps from human misperception of distance from God.

For an expression of another contemporary opinion, firmer than Fr. Jelly's and strongly divergent from St. Bonaventure's, consider E. Carroll's: "To look on Mary as a 'mother of mercy' who protects from Christ, 'the angry judge' is a travesty of Christian and Catholic belief."<sup>972</sup>

Another problem occurs: fairness to St. Thomas. Unlike him, St. Bonaventure left only a small amount of academic writings. Commentators must look to the sermons, less rigid and dry. Consequently, the Franciscan may appear more devout, "more Marian," than the Dominican, especially in this present matter of her distributing, mediating grace and our petitioning her for favors. I cannot set right this "apples-to-oranges" comparison of sermons to scholarship: I only call it to your attention.<sup>973</sup>

### Hierarchical Action: The Way Mary Sanctifies

Mary contributes to the sanctification of humans and angels. St. Bonaventure discusses this in terms of hierarchies, a concept which came to the Scholastics from Pseudo-Dionysius and which is a favorite topic of all the Seraphic Doctor's writings.<sup>974</sup>

Pseudo-Dionysius saw an analogy among the Holy Trinity, the heavenly hierarchy of the angels (three triads of descending dignity), and the hierarchy of

<sup>971</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, p. 162.

<sup>972</sup> E. Carroll, "Mary, the mother of Jesus," p. 82. F. Jelly explains the origin of this justice/mercy division: "... Because the Church was striving to overcome the Arianism of the Visigoths and barbaric tribes that were converted to Christianity without adequate catechesis, the humanity of the risen Lord as the unique mediator of redemption gave way to an emphasis on the divinity of the celestial Christ. Mary's mediation, for the pardon of sinners, before the throne of her Son, began to become a quasi-substitute for his unique mediatorship." "Congar's anthropology," p. 86.

<sup>973</sup> For some balance, let us look at a sermon of St. Thomas on the "Hail Mary." "It is indeed a great thing that any one saint has so much grace that it conduces to the salvation of many; but most wondrous is it to have so much as to suffice for the salvation of all mankind: and thus is it in Christ and in the Blessed Virgin. Thus in every danger thou canst find a refuge in this same glorious Virgin:...thou mayest obtain her assistance in every virtuous deed: ...she is rightly called 'Mary,' which signifies 'enlightened' -- in herself -- ...and enlightening others throughout the world below: ..." Aquinas, *The three greatest prayers* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1956), pp. 32f.

<sup>974</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 128.

the Church, divided into the triad of priests (bishops, priests, and liturgists) and the triad of initiates (monks, holy laity, and catechumens). These hierarchies of Dionysius were not just institutional structures. They were families of spiritual dynamism: "For the process of descent is one of illumination or influence of the lower by the higher orders. And this influence was brought down to the three acts of purification, illumination, and perfection or union."<sup>975</sup>

Carpenter says Bonaventure wants our souls to be healed:

Against the deformed condition of the soul, St. Bonaventure affords a remedy that is characteristic of his spiritual anthropology. He calls it the hierarchization of the soul, using the concept and terminology of Dionysius Areopagite.

Dionysius defines hierarchy as follows:

"In my opinion, hierarchy is a sacred order ("taxis hiera"), a state of understanding ("koa episteme") and an activity ("koa energia") approximating as closely as possible to the divine. And it is uplifted to the imitation of God in proportion to the enlightenment divinely given to it."<sup>976</sup>

The soul has to be reordered according to a process of hierarchization that restructures the soul according to its place in God's design and to its true image, that is, both among other creatures above and below it, and within itself.<sup>977</sup>

The Franciscan Master made great use of these three, purification, illumination and union, hierarchical acts of influence by higher orders on the lower, especially in his *Triple Way*. An unusual feature of his theology is that he holds the three activities of purgation, illumination, and unitive perfection to be simultaneous rather than one after another. "The soul's ascent to God passes through the three ways of constant purification from sin, progressive illumination by divine grace, and growing union with God who makes himself the soul's heavenly spouse."<sup>978</sup>

Tavard continues: "This is precisely the key to much of what we may now call Bonaventure's spiritual Mariology."<sup>979</sup> Of the titles of Mary, he says the principal one is "Star of the Sea," containing "Bitter Sea," and "Lady." Since Our Lady is highest of all creatures, she purifies, illumines, and unites to God, all those below her:

<sup>975</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 128.

<sup>976</sup> Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy*, chap. 3; quoted in C. Carpenter, *Way to holiness*, p. 45; transl. by C. Luibhéid in *Pseudo-Dionysius; the complete works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), p. 153.

<sup>977</sup> C. Carpenter, *Way to holiness*, p. 45.

<sup>978</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 128f.

<sup>979</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 129.

The principal interpretation of "Mary" is Star of the Sea, and this interpretation comprises all the others.... The glorious Virgin is the Star of the Sea, purifying those who are in the sea of this world, illuminating and perfecting them. Let us therefore follow the Star of the Sea who purifies through the weeping of *bitter* compunction, the Star of the Sea who illuminates through application of the illuminative power, the Star of the Sea who perfects through the vow of perfection. She is the purifier, the illuminator, and the perfecter. I am mistaken unless the name of the Virgin implies all three. For Mary is interpreted as Bitter Sea, *Illuminatrix*, and Lady; she received the graces of purgation, illumination and perfection.<sup>980</sup>

### Moral Causality? Physical?

St. Bonaventure's language above seems strong, similar to some contemporary Mariology. J. Schug says, "In my view, Mary is a physical instrumental cause in the distribution of all grace..."<sup>981</sup> On the contrary, Tavard says, of these passages from Bonaventure, "...Mary has been asked to pray for us, who still need to be purified, illuminated, and perfected."<sup>982</sup> This is prayerful intercession, merely moral causality. St. Bonaventure says, "...by that which was born from her all are sanctified; and therefore she can rightly be called the diffusive principle of sanctification."<sup>983</sup> Apparently then, her sole act of grace-giving was to bear Christ; she does not intervene in the distribution of grace.

Other passages suggest she gives us grace by her direct, personal action, not just asking God and seeing him give it.

That Mary is such a model of *hierarchical* action implies that she has been placed not only above her fellow human beings who are in the process of being purified, illuminated, and perfected, but even above the angels who, as Denys sees the universe — and the Seraphic Doctor still shares his vision — nurture the purification, illumination, and perfection of humankind. Indeed, this is the meaning of her Assumption: "She has been raised above the angelic *hierarchy* which purifies, illumines, and perfects, and above the human *hierarchy* to be purified, illuminated

<sup>980</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.V.M., Sermo I*; IX, p. 636. Principalis interpretatio Mariae est *stella maris*, et ista interpretatio omnes alias comprehendit.... Virgo gloriosa (est) maris stella purificans eos qui sunt in mari hujus mundi, illuminans et perficiens. Sequamur igitur stellam maris *purificans* per gemitum compunctionis amarae, stellam maris *illuminantem* per studium virtutis illuminativae, stellam maris *perficientem* per votum perfectionis. Ipsa est enim *purgatrix, illuminatrix, et perfectrix*. Fallor, nisi nomen Virginis importat ista tria. Maria enim interpretatur *amarum mare, illuminatrix, et domina*; ipsa suscepit gratias purgativas, illuminativas et perficientes. Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 127

<sup>981</sup> J. Schug, *Mary, Mother* (Springfield, Mass.: St. Francis Chapel Press, 1992), p. 8.

<sup>982</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 129.

<sup>983</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.V.M., Sermo II*; IX, p. 642. "Per istud natum ex ea omnes sanctificantur; et ideo ipsa merito potest dici principium sanctificationis diffusivum;..." Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 130

and perfected.<sup>984</sup> To this elevation Bonaventure devotes his first homily on the Assumption of Mary. Significantly, the name of Mary is again connected with this: "The Virgin performs this act"<sup>985</sup> [of *hierarchic* influence (Tavard)] in the hierarchies of angels and men, that are below her. Whence Mary is fittingly called Bitter Sea, since she purifies; Illuminatrix, since she illuminates; Lady, since she brings to perfection and consummation."<sup>986</sup>

As the Seraphic Doctor took the notion of hierarchies from Pseudo-Dionysius, so he from Proclus: "...The thought of Pseudo-Dionysius ...is directly influenced by the latest forms of Neoplatonism, as found in Proclus. No other early Christian writer was so clearly influenced by a particular philosopher."<sup>987</sup> Neoplatonism would clearly favor a physical causality from the superior members of the hierarchy on those below. Proclus, and his master, Plotinus, held the lower entities "emanated" from the next higher, flowed forth, were born of, the nearest higher. Pseudo-Dionysius rejected this: "Each member of the hierarchy comes directly from God, in contrast with the emanations of Proclus, which produce one another. The Christian doctrine of creation makes the unity of the hierarchy one of spiritual communion rather than that of progressive generation."<sup>988</sup>

Pseudo-Dionysius holds the higher members of the hierarchy, while they do not produce the lower members. They do influence them: "The celestial hierarchy contemplates the divine perfection and shares in it, reflecting its light down through its several ranks." If he is one short step away from the physical generation of Proclus, we ought, probably, to see this reflection as something physical, a real impact of the higher on the lower. Proclus held the higher entities, produced, gave birth to the lower, called them from non-being into being, certainly a process of physical causality. Pseudo-Dionysius disagreed with that but still remained very close to Proclus. If there is doubt about the causality of the higher beings on the lower in Dionysius, we should presume he included physical causality, since Proclus gave the higher beings the power to cause the existence of the lower.

Granted, physical causality on a person with free choice will involve that freedom and will not be the same as kicking a stone, which has no power to resist, except inertia, cannot choose *not* to be influenced. But the grace of God

<sup>984</sup> Bonaventure, *De Assumptione B.V.M. Sermo I*; IX, p. 689.

<sup>985</sup> "...Performs this act. . ." "... hunc actum . . . habet. . ."

<sup>986</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, 131; Bonaventure, *In Assumptione B.V.M., Sermo I*; IX, p. 689; emphasis added, L.Gl.

<sup>987</sup> *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. "Pseudo-Dionysius," VI, 510.

<sup>988</sup> *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. "Pseudo-Dionysius," VI, 511.

is a reality, which can be communicated by the sacraments, quite possibly by other means as well.<sup>989</sup>

Assuming, then, that Pseudo-Dionysius holds a physical role for the superiors in the hierarchy, something beyond asking God to give grace to others, does St. Bonaventure hold this for Mary? P. Fehlner writes:

...I doubt that St. Bonaventure would reduce this to "mere intercession" or admit that moral causality is only metaphorical, or not true efficient causality. Even though not the *causa effectiva*, the moral cause need not thereby have no objective immediate impact on its effect. If it does not, it is hard to explain (except by assuming an incredible inconsistency in his thought) the Seraphic Doctor's many descriptions of what Our Lady does in distributing grace ...Mary's intercession is unique and entails not just an influence on God, but also on us – directly. Or to use the Thomistic terminology of the present: Her moral causality in our lives is the vehicle or the instrument of God's physical causality.<sup>990</sup>

Not all see physical causality in Bonaventure's doctrine on Mary's sanctifying power. L. DiFonzo says: "The Seraphic Doctor, therefore, excludes physical causality from the mediation of the Virgin: he retains only moral causality, that is, through intercession."<sup>991</sup> Roschini, in his review of DiFonzo's book, agrees with him: Mary's mediation is by way of intercession, thus through moral causality. "Physical causality seems alien to the mind of the Holy Doctor."<sup>992</sup>

This discussion of Mary's causality is the more obscure because of the Franciscan Master's teaching on causality in general: John Schug thinks so. "Perhaps St. Bonaventure places Mary in a unique position because of his definitions of instrumental and moral causes."<sup>993</sup> Fr. Schug's *Mary, Mother* is a masterful study of physical and moral causality in Mary's ministry to us. If he cannot decide what the Seraphic Doctor held, I believe the question can be considered an open one. At least, her gaining of grace for us seems more direct and powerful in Bonaventure than in most medievals.

In regard to the Angelic Doctor, Schug tells us, "St. Thomas never affirmed or denied Mary's instrumental causality of grace."<sup>994</sup> In physical generation, the Angelic Doctor followed Aristotle in saying the mother was totally passive. "St. Thomas could not see a primary analogate in human motherhood that could be

<sup>989</sup> Schug, *Mary, Mother*, pp. 28-34 on the causality of the sacraments and his analysis of St. Thomas' thought on instrumental causality. Aquinas, III, 62, a. 4.

<sup>990</sup> P. Fehlner, private letter, in Schug, *Mary, Mother*, pp. 104f.

<sup>991</sup> L. Di Fonzo *Doctrina S. Bonaventurae de universale mediatione B. Virginis Mariae* Rome: Pontificia Facultas Theologiae O.F.M.Conv., (1938), p. 284.

<sup>992</sup> Roschini, "Bonaventura sulla mediazione," p. 19, transl. L. Gl; Cf. DiFonzo, 9, 679.

<sup>993</sup> Schug, *Mary, Mother*, p. 104.

<sup>994</sup> Schug, *Mary, Mother*, p. 108.

applicable to Mary's spiritual motherhood.... He seems merely to have kept a discreet silence."<sup>995</sup>

Perhaps an acceptable middle way of interpreting Bonaventure and other medievals may be found through Fehlner's words above, excluding physical causality but emphasizing the reality and efficacy of moral causality. Perhaps they mean to attribute to her a physical instrumental causality, but one which is instrumentally *dispositive*, as opposed to the physical, instrumental, and *perfective* causality which many see in the sacraments.<sup>996</sup>

Mary exercises her power on the Church's hierarchy, according to Tavard: "Bonaventure devotes special attention to the Church's hierarchy in the more popular sense of the term. This is the sacerdotal triad of bishops, priests, and liturgists (or ministers of the lower orders)."<sup>997</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor relates this to Mary's Purification:

I say first that the purification of the glorious Virgin signifies the purification of the ecclesial hierarchy ...I say therefore that, in order to begin the purification of the Church's ministers, the glorious Virgin was purified interiorly and in truth by receiving sanctifying grace....<sup>998</sup>

But since the ecclesial hierarchy often suffers damage in its members, it needs to be restored by divine grace, and other sanctifying grace is necessary, namely, the penitential grace.<sup>999</sup>

Penitential grace is imaged in Mary's purification, after forty days. Forty is the number both of sin and of penance.<sup>1000</sup> Forty is obtained by multiplying the "ten" of the commandments by four other elements. For sin, "suggestion, delectation, consent, and action" (or "transgression, suggestion, consent, and delectation"). To get the "forty" which is also the number of penance, multiply the commandments "ten" by these four: "recognition of sin, detestation, accu-

<sup>995</sup> Schug, *Mary, Mother*, p. 113. Schug quotes St. Albert the Great in favor of physical instrumental causality but admits some difficulty with the authenticity of the expression, "She is the efficient cause of our salvation" and analyzes St. Albert's use of metaphors; pp.99f.

<sup>996</sup> Aquinas, III, 62, 1 & 2; Scheeben, M., *The mysteries of Christianity* (St. Louis: Herder, 1964), pp. 570f.; J. Herve, *Manuale Theologiae Dogmaticae*. 4 Vols. Paris: Berche and Pagis, 1949, vol 3, nos. 426f.

<sup>997</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.133.

<sup>998</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.V.M., Sermo I*; IX, p. 634. Primo, dico, purificatio gloriosae Virginis significat purificationem ecclesiasticae hierarchiae,...

Dico igitur, quod virgo gloriosa, ut inchoaret purificationem ministrorum Ecclesiae, interius purgata fuit et secundum veritatem per susceptionem gratiae sanctificantis,...

<sup>999</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.V.M., Sermo I*; IX, p. 635. Sed quia ecclesiastica hierarchia frequenter patitur detrimentum in membris suis, ideo indiget restauratione per divinam gratiam, et est necessaria alia sanctificans, scilicet gratia poenitentialis. Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 134.

<sup>1000</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.V.M., Sermo I*; IX, p. 635. "Dico quod numerus quadragenarius est numerus transgressionis et numerus poenitentiae."

sation and emendation "This number forty, which thus designates 'the integrity of penance', is in Mary, not for herself, but for the Church."<sup>1001</sup>

Besides the church hierarchy of bishops, priests, and lower ministers, St. Bonaventure also relates Mary to the purification of Pseudo-Dionysius' other ecclesiastical hierarchy, monks, laity, and catechumens, especially the friars of his order, to whom most of his sermons were addressed.<sup>1002</sup>

### The Marriage at Cana, according to St. Bonaventure

The Seraphic Doctor, like the Angelic, comments on the marriage at Cana. "This is the only Marian passage in the Gospel of John which Bonaventure selects for special attention."<sup>1003</sup> Following Sts. Jerome and Augustine, he says it was the marriage of St. John himself. "That John was also widely believed to have remained a virgin is not an insuperable objection. For then John would have been in the same position as Mary in relation to her marriage."<sup>1004</sup> "Like the Virgin Mary, he entrusted himself to the will of the Holy Spirit, so that the virgin who was to serve the Virgin [i.e., after the Crucifixion, when he received Mary into his house – Tavad], would be similar to the Virgin in the way of virginity."<sup>1005</sup>

The Gospel does not say she was invited. The Franciscan Master says she went for reasons of kinship, "in order to oblige," just as she went to Elizabeth.<sup>1006</sup> "What the exact kinship was, Bonaventure does not explain; but in the Middle Ages it was widely held that Mary was John's maternal aunt."<sup>1007</sup> Toward the end of his *Commentary on John*, our saint states that St. Ann had three husbands and, by each a daughter named Mary, who were mothers, the first of Jesus, the second of James, the third of Simon and Jude. "In this case, there were several relatives of Jesus in the group of the apostles..."<sup>1008</sup> And several relatives of the bridegroom, John.<sup>1009</sup>

<sup>1001</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.V.M.*, *Sermo 1*; IX, p. 635. . "Igitur in numero quadragenario designatur integritas poenitentiae; et est in Maria, non propter eam sed propter Ecclesiam." Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 135

<sup>1002</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 135.

<sup>1003</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 80.

<sup>1004</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 81

<sup>1005</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 81; Bonaventure, *Comment. in Joannem*, cap. 2, n. 15; VI, p. 272.

<sup>1006</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 81; ". . . Ratione affinitatis ivit, tanquam officiosa . . ." Bonaventure, *Comment. in Joannem*, cap. 2, n. 1.; VI, p. 269.

<sup>1007</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 81.

<sup>1008</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 81; *Comment in Joan.*, cap. 19, n. 37; VI, p. 498.

<sup>1009</sup> John is believed to have remained a virgin. The *Commentarium in Joanneum* says he entrusted himself to the will of the Holy Spirit, like Mary. Cap.2, n. 15; VI, p. 272.

The wine ran out. Mary told her son. He replied, "What is it to me and to you, woman?" Tavard tells us, "The answer is unexpected, in that, rather than seeing the word as a rebuke, Bonaventure reads it as justifying her request."<sup>1010</sup> "He calls her woman, not on account of any weakness, but in reference to her nature and sex. For this is the woman of whom it is said in *Proverbs*: 'Who will find a strong woman?' As though he said: 'You have power to ask for this as a holy woman, not as a mother.'"<sup>1011</sup>

The Franciscan Master develops this in a separate question, in which he says Jesus' answer was not "insultatoria" but "instructatoria." And he continues:

The Lord showed in his response that she must not ask for this as a mother, since he could not do it by the power of the nature he had taken from her; therefore he says to her, *woman*, not *mother*. She must not ask in favor of relatives, like one who cares for kinship of the flesh; therefore he says: *What is it to me and to you?* He shows that a miracle should not be done to remedy want, but to manifest his glory, the necessity of which was not yet there; therefore he says: *My hour has not yet come*. Since, however, the woman who asked was holy, and since those for whom she asked were poor, and since his glory had to be manifested to his disciples, therefore he listened to her.<sup>1012</sup>

At least when others were concerned, the relation of Mary to Jesus was not simply of mother to son, according to the Seraphic Doctor, but of the strong woman of Proverbs to her wonder-working Lord.

Tavard tells us, "So far, Bonaventure has focused attention chiefly on what he identified as the literal sense of the biblical passage."<sup>1013</sup> (Granted, his idea of the literal sense is different from that of contemporary exegetes.) He goes on:

But medieval reflection is seldom confined to the literal sense. Medieval preaching never is. [Tavard will quote from homilies – L. Gl.] For the listeners' edification, it liked to investigate also the moral sense: what does the text imply in regard to Christian behavior? It also delved into the allegorical or analogical sense: what does the text imply, in the analogy of faith, regarding the doctrines that relate to Christ and salvation?<sup>1014</sup>

What is the allegorical sense of the Cana pericope? The Seraphic Doctor tells us there are three kinds of time: of nature, of the Law, and of grace. In the time of grace, the third day is when a wedding took place between the Church and Christ, when the divine Word took on flesh. In this marriage six

<sup>1010</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 82; Bonaventure, *Comment. in Joann.*, cap. 2, n. 4.; VI, p. 269.

<sup>1011</sup> Bonaventure, *Comment. in Joann.*, cap. 2, n. 4; VI, p. 269; in Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p.82.

<sup>1012</sup> Bonaventure, *Comment. in Joann.*, cap.2, n. 17, q. 4, resp.; VI, p. 273; in Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 273.

<sup>1013</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 83.

<sup>1014</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 83.



jars of tasteless and nutritionless water were changed into delicious and cheering wine, the darkness of the Law into truth, a variety of sacrifices into one, the harshness of penalties into joy, puzzles into light, fears into love, pledges into achievement. "And all this was done in answer to the Virgin's prayers as she interceded."<sup>1015</sup>

In the *Collationes in Joannem*, the Saint returns to the spiritual meaning of this marriage. It corresponds to the wedding between the soul and God, "For Cana means 'zeal,' and Galilee means 'transmigration', that is transient, or 'wheel', that is, quick." This enables Bonaventure to suggest this spiritual interpretation of the episode:

These nuptials take place in the conscience of the soul that has the zeal of love, which soul migrates to the mountain of the Lord with the devotion of her mind, and is quick with the swiftness of her action. In these nuptials the Lord changes the water of tears into the wine of consolation, especially if the Mother of Jesus is there.<sup>1016</sup>

In the next conference, the Franciscan Master continues:

How good it is for one to invite to his banquet Jesus' Mother, who supplies to the poor at the banquet, the consolation of sympathy, the advice of instruction, the assistance of prayer. It is a sign of compassion that she says, "They have no wine." She gives the counsel of instruction by saying, "Do whatever he tells you." The suffrage of prayer lay in her obtaining from her Son the miracle of the change from water into wine.<sup>1017</sup>

Preaching on Jesus' words, "I will give you another advocate," the Franciscan Doctor says the Lord will give us three advocates, himself, the Holy Spirit, and Our Lady. He is the advocate who fights in our defense, the Spirit speaks out for us, and Our Lady is the advocate of intercession, who shows her womanly nature to move the judge more: "She is the Esther at whose sight the king's heart was changed into kindness, as is prefigured in Esther 15:11. She is the one to whom the Church sings, "Oh, therefore, our Advocate"<sup>1018</sup>

Fr. Jelly, referring to Vatican II's *Lumen gentium*, says: "...The ecumenical problems associated with the invocation and intercession of Mary would be placed in better perspective by perceiving her spiritual maternity in glory, as based upon God's will for her motherhood of the Lord upon earth."<sup>1019</sup>

<sup>1015</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 84; Bonaventure, *Comment. in Joann.*, cap. 2, n. 12; VI, p. 270.

<sup>1016</sup> Bonaventure, *Collat. in Joann.*, cap 2, coll. 8, n. 5; VI, p. 545; Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 85.

<sup>1017</sup> Bonaventure, *Collat. in Joann.*, cap. 2, coll. 9, n. 1; VI, p. 547.

<sup>1018</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 88; Bonaventure, *Collat. in Joann.*, cap. 14, coll. 53, nos. 3 & 4; VI, p. 603. "Eja ergo, advocata nostra

<sup>1019</sup> Jelly, "Concrete meaning," p. 40.

The section to which he refers says, in part: "The motherhood of Mary in the order of grace continues uninterruptedly from the consent which she loyally gave at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross...Taken up to heaven, she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation."<sup>1020</sup>

Her intercession at Cana is a conspicuous moment in the earthly beginning of her heavenly care.

### Mary, Mother of All Christ's Disciples

These comments of St. Bonaventure on the marriage at Cana do not reveal a purely private relation between Jesus and Mary. She enters into and works along with his saving the world. She is a co-redeemer, not in any sense of equality - as the English language understands "co-" - but in the meaning it has in Latin, of being associated with.<sup>1021</sup>

Fr. F. Jelly explains it this way:

As members of his redeemed-redeeming Body the Church, of which he is the Head, we are called to be channels of redemption to one another and to our world. Always dependent upon the grace of Christ, we are able to help build up the Body of Christ in love through our prayers, sufferings, and good works flowing from our faith. The term "co-redemptrix" has become confusing, however, especially in our language, where the prefix "co-" does not have the same connotation as it does in the Latin *con* whence it is derived. A *Con-Redemptor* or *Con-Redemptrix* merely associates another or others with the one Redeemer but always in a completely dependent and subordinate role. But usually in English "co-" makes the other an equal partner in an enterprise or relationship, e.g. the co-signer of a checking account. And so the Council did not call Mary "Co-Redemptrix" to avoid confusion as well as to prevent any ecumenical misunderstanding...<sup>1022</sup>

One section of the *Commentary on John* shows a more exclusively personal relationship:

*There were, standing beside the cross* etc. Here is pointed out the small number of sharers of his suffering; because of all those dear to him, three women were present, among whom was the Mother of the Lord, on whom the Lord also had compassion. And here four things should be noticed: the compassion of the women for the Lord, the Lord's solicitude toward his Mother, the commendation which came from the solicitude, and lastly, the acceptance of the commendation.

The compassion of the women is noted in this that it says: *They stood next to the cross of Jesus*; they drew near in body because the affection of compassion drew

<sup>1020</sup> Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, no. 62.

<sup>1021</sup> In English, the prefix "co" can even mean "reciprocal." *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, Ed. P. Gove (Springfield, Mass.: G & C Merriam Co., 1971)

<sup>1022</sup> Jelly, *Madonna*, p. 161.

them. But others withdrew afar through lack of compassion;... But these stood close by, because they loved more, that is, his Mother, who had more compassion than all; as the second chapter of Luke says, "Your own heart a sword shall pierce,...."

*Therefore, when Jesus saw his mother.* Here is noted the second thing, that is, the solicitude of the Lord toward his Mother, in that he looked at her and at the one to whom he could commend her; therefore it says, "When Jesus saw his Mother;" "he saw her" in a solicitous way; in the fifth chapter of the first letter to Timothy: "If anyone does not care for his own and especially the members of his own household," etc. and Chrysostom: "The Lord shows us here great love for his Mother and commends her to the disciple, teaching us to take every care of those who bore us up to our last breath," ... "And the disciple whom he loved, standing there," and therefore he could entrust her to him as a member of his family."<sup>1023</sup> "...He said: Woman, behold thy son," as if to say, you should trust him as a son. "Then he said to his disciple: Behold Your Mother," as if to say: take care of her as a mother.

"He took her," that is, the mother, "into his own," so that he honored, guarded, and served her as a son his mother."<sup>1024</sup>

Today, Catholics say "Behold thy son," referred to Mary's cosmic vocation to be the mother of all Jesus' beloved disciples and, in recapitulation of the Fall,

<sup>1023</sup> Bonaventure adds John to the list of the three loyal women: "Stabat Joannes, non recesserat; unde erat unus de illis de quibus Lucae vigesimo secundo: "Vos estis, qui permansistis mecum in tentationibus meis." *Comment. in Joann.*, cap. 19, no. 38; VI, p.498. *Stabant autem iuxta crucem* etc. Hic notatur compatientium paucitas; quia ex omnibus caris eius tres aderant mulieres, inter quas et Mater Domini, cui etiam Dominus compatiebatur. Et notandum hic quattuor: mulierum ad Dominum compassio, Domini erga Matrem sollicitudo et ex sollicitudine recommendatio et ultimum recommendationis acceptio.

Notatur ergo mulierum compassio in hoc quod dicit: *Stabant iuxta crucem Iesu*; ideo corpore appropinquabant, quia affectus compassionis trahebat. Alii vero longe recesserunt per incompassionem; ...Sed istae steterunt iuxta, quae magis diligebant, scilicet Mater eius, quae super omnes compatiebatur; unde Lucae secundo: "Tuam ipsius animam pertransibit gladio;"...

*Cum vidisset ergo Jesus.* Hic notatur secundum, scilicet Domini erga Matrem sollicitudo, in hoc, quod respexit eam et cui posset eam recommendare; unde dicit: "Cum vidisset enim Jesus matrem;" "cum vidisset" ut sollicitus; primae ad Timotheum quinto: "Si quis suorum et maxime domesticorum curam non habet" etc. Et Chrysostomus: "Hic multam dilectionem monstrat Dominus ad Matrem et commendat eam discipulo, erudiens nos, usque ad ultimam respirationem omnem facere diligentiam eorum qui nos genuerunt."..."Et discipulum stantem, quem diligebat;" et ideo eam sibi familiariter recommendare poterat.

<sup>1024</sup> Bonaventure, *Comment in Joann.*, cap. 19, nos. 38 & 39; VI, p. 498. "...Dicit: Mulier, ecce filius tuus;" quasi: ita confidas de eo sicut de filio.

"Deinde dicit discipulo: Ecce mater tua;" quasi: ita eam custodias ut matrem.

"In suam," scilicet matrem, "accepit," ut illam, sicut matrem filius, honoraret, custodiret et servaret.

put her in parallel to Eve, the mother of all the living.<sup>1025</sup> St. Bonaventure, very differently, makes this a purely domestic arrangement for Mary's care.

Speaking of Our Lady as "Mother of the Faithful," Tavard says:

One should readily admit that this is not a frequent theme in the works of Bonaventure. It is even rare. Yet it should not be neglected, because, if the notion that Mary is in some sense a mother to the faithful does not function as a principle in Bonaventure's Mariology, it has the quality of a conclusion.<sup>1026</sup>

The Seraphic Doctor considers it an important point that all Christians must follow Our Lord and, by doing this, will imitate Our Lady, through whom Christ came to us. This point derives from the contrast between the Blessed Virgin and Eve.<sup>1027</sup>

And Jesus said: 'Rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.'<sup>1028</sup> ...Not only is she blessed, the one who conceived and breast-fed him, but also those who follow her. And who are these? They are those who hear the word of God and fulfill it.<sup>1029</sup>

Tavard's comment on this is:

Thus is Mary's response to the angel the key to her whole life and to that of all the faithful. These formulate their own *fiat* on the model of hers. And such a *fiat* cannot remain an isolated moment at the beginning of the life of faith; it must be constantly renewed in the everyday actions of one's life. This was the case with Mary, for she heard the word of God and fulfilled it.<sup>1030</sup>

Father Tavard then points out how the Seraphic Doctor's understanding of "Behold your son, ...your mother," radically departs from today's common Marian piety:

Bonaventure is then led to an unusual interpretation of the words of Jesus on the cross, "This is your son.... This is your Mother." he has just remarked that Mary did consent to Jesus' self-offering to the Father for the sins of humankind: "She

<sup>1025</sup> E.g. "The same idea is suggested by the scene on Calvary, where the words of Jesus to His mother, 'Woman, behold your son (John 19:26)!' point symbolically to Mary's spiritual motherhood of all the faithful. . . . Mary is definitely designated as the 'Woman,' the 'New Eve' associated with the 'New Adam' . . ." Jelly, "The Mother of Jesus," p. 93.

<sup>1026</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 176f.

<sup>1027</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 177.

<sup>1028</sup> Luke, c. 11, v. 28. Et dixit Iesus: "Quinimmo, beati qui audiunt verbum Dei et custodiunt illud"

<sup>1029</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes in Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 7; V, pp. 484f. Non solum ipsa beata est, quae ipsum concepit et lactavit, sed etiam qui eam sequuntur. Et qui sunt illi? Qui audiunt verbum Dei et implent illud. Transl., Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 177

<sup>1030</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 177.

agreed that the price of her womb be offered for us on the cross."<sup>1031</sup> Then, as Jesus saw his Mother with the other women and with his disciple, he said to his Mother: 'Woman, this is your Son,' that is, 'who is being exchanged as the price of the redemption of humankind'; as though he said: 'It is opportune that you miss me, and that I miss you' — and you yourself in holiness conceived him and in piety offer him up; 'may you agree, O Virgin, that I redeem humankind and that I please God.' And, lest she be destitute, he told the disciple: 'This is your Mother.' He gave the Virgin a virginal man.<sup>1032</sup>

This may be, to us today, an unusual interpretation of Jesus' words, as Tavard says. But St. Thomas also saw them as a domestic testament. Asking her to endorse his redemptive agony may be more unusual.

Tavard makes explicit the restricted view Bonaventure takes:

Thus understood, the word from the cross does not designate the faithful as Mary's sons and daughters. Jesus remains her only Son. He wished his mother, at that point of his agony, still to recognize him as indeed her Son, and thus to suffer with himself. In the process, by an afterthought which was not essential to the main point, but which expressed Jesus' last human care for his mother, the disciple whom Jesus loved was given a mother to look after. It is therefore not through a spiritual reading of this text that Bonaventure concludes to a symbolic motherhood of Mary for the faithful. Only a further extension of the parallel Eve-Mary leads the Seraphic Doctor to this point: "As Eve is the mother of Abel and of all of us, so the Christian people has the Virgin as its mother."<sup>1033</sup>

### A Consequence for the Sanctity of Others

St. Bonaventure's final theological synthesis is in his three series of conferences, on the ten commandments, on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and on the six days of creation.<sup>1034</sup> We are introduced to Our Lady in the context of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially counsel and fortitude. "Thus a first glance shows that Mary belongs at the center of God's design for creaturely holiness."<sup>1035</sup> His method is dialectical, going from a corporate point of view, primarily featuring

<sup>1031</sup> "Et placuit ei, quod pretium uteri sui offeretur in cruce pro nobis." Bonaventure, *Collationes in Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 15; V, p. 486.

<sup>1032</sup> "... Dicit matri suae: 'Mulier, ecce filius tuus,' scilicet, qui tradetur in pretium redemptionis generis humani; ac si diceret: oportet, te carere me, et me carere te — et tu ipsa sicut sancta ipsum concepisti, et sicut pia eum offers — placeat tibi, Virgo, quod genus humanum redimo et Deum placeo. Et ne destituta esset, dixit discipulo: 'Ecce mater tua; hominem virginem dedit Virgini.'" Bonaventure, *Collationes in Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 15; V, p. 486.

<sup>1033</sup> "Et sicut Eva mater est Abel et omnium nostrum, ita populus Christianus habet matrem Virginem." Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 20; V, p. 487; Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 178.

<sup>1034</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 166.

<sup>1035</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 167.

the Church, then passing to the personal view, the call to grace of each one of the faithful, "by way of the Virgin Mary, whose place in the design of God is both ecclesial and personal."<sup>1036</sup> The Seraphic Doctor resumes one of his favorite themes, the Annunciation, as the prime example of God's relation to the human race.<sup>1037</sup>

Bonaventure uses the comparison to the sun to describe what she does for the Church. "Sicut enim sol praececlit et decorat corpora totius machinae mundialis, sic beata Virgo praececlit et decorat membra totius Ecclesiae militantis et etiam triumphantis."<sup>1038</sup>

Tavard tells us:

Bonaventure believes that a warm piety toward the Virgin is indispensable to holiness: "I have never read about any of the saints, who would have no special devotion to the glorious Virgin."<sup>1039</sup> Numquam legi aliquem Sanctorum, qui non haberet specialem devotionem ad Virginem gloriosam.<sup>1040</sup>

On "Becoming Mary"

...It secretly entered my mind that a soul devoted to God could, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, conceive God the Father's Word and only Son by the power of the Most High<sup>1041</sup>

In other words, the Annunciation by the angel is not only made to the Virgin Mary. It is addressed to all faithful souls. This point of departure enables Bonaventure to experience, and then to explain, five moments of the mystic journey, which correspond to the five feasts of the child Jesus: in the faithful and devout soul, (1) Jesus is conceived; (2) he is born; (3) he is named; (4) he is sought and adored on the model of the Magi; (5) he is presented to God in the Temple.

Naturally enough, Mary fulfills a role in this spiritualization of the mysteries of Jesus' infancy, since she is the prime scriptural model, who conceives Jesus, from whom he is born, who gives him his name, who welcomes the magi, who presents the child to God in the Temple. In fact, Mary now becomes the model for the soul and, conversely, the soul becomes, spiritually, Mary. Bonaventure now invites the

<sup>1036</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 169.

<sup>1037</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 169.

<sup>1038</sup> Bonaventure, *In Nativ. B.M.*, Sermo 3; IX, p. 712. Cf. H. Barré, "Marie et l'Eglise," p. 95.

<sup>1039</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 136.

<sup>1040</sup> Bonaventure, *De Purif. B.V.M.*, *Sermo II*; IX, p. 642.

<sup>1041</sup> Bonaventure, *De quinque festiualibus pueri Jesu*, prologus; VIII, p. 88. ...Incidit menti meae secretius, quod anima Deo devota benedictum Dei Patris Verbum et Filium unigenitum mediante gratia Spiritus sancti spiritualiter posset virtute Altissimi concipere... Transl., Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 157.



soul, not only to "ascend the mountain with Mary" (as for the visitation) but even to be Mary. "O, devout soul, if this delightful nativity pleases you, you must first be Mary." ["Sed notandum est hic, o anima devota, si te haec delectat iucunda nativitas, debes esse primo Maria."] <sup>1042</sup> In a sort of dialectical motion, attention shifts from the historical Mary, Mother of Jesus, to the spiritual Mary, the Christian soul, and then again to the historical Mary, who is also spiritual. <sup>1043</sup>

### St. Bonaventure Sees Marian Symbolism in the Cana Narrative

The symbolism in the Cana account is principally ecclesial and Eucharistic. The Seraphic Doctor does not neglect these. He says, of the Cana wedding:

It is the marriage of Jesus Christ and the Church, and [a wedding] of this kind has in the present time the nuptials of the Eucharist as a noon meal and in the future, as an evening meal, the nuptials of glory. <sup>1044</sup>

It signifies also the marriage of God and the soul. "There are spiritual nuptials of God and the soul, and these can be fittingly understood through the wedding performed in Cana of Galilee." <sup>1045</sup>

There is also Marian symbolism, which Bonaventure relates primarily to this wedding of the individual soul to God. "O quam bonum est, Matrem Iesu ad suum convivium invitare,..." [ "Oh, how good it is to invite the Mother of Jesus to one's banquet." Bonaventure points out that St. John does not say Mary was *invited* to the wedding at Cana. He quotes John:

"Et erat mater Iesu ibi." Non dicitur, quod fuerit vocata, quia ratione affinitatis ivit tamquam officiosa, sicut etiam abiit in montana ad Elisabeth ad serviendum ei, ..." [ "And the mother of Jesus was there." It does not say she was invited, because by reason of her relationship, she went as duty-bound, as she had also gone to the hill country to Elizabeth, in order to serve her,..." ]

Jesus, the saint says, *was* invited, and invited because of Mary. "By reason of her, the Lord was also invited. Chrysostom [says], 'He was invited to the wedding, not as anyone great but as a relative.'" <sup>1046</sup> The wedding at Cana, to

<sup>1042</sup> Bonaventure, *De quinque festivitatibus pueri Iesu*, n. 2; VIII, p. 91.

<sup>1043</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 157f.

<sup>1044</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes in Ioannem*, cap. 2, coll. 8, no. 3; VI, p. 545. Est matrimonium Iesu Christi et Ecclesiae, et huiusmodi habet in presenti nuptias eucharistiae quasi prandium et in futuro quasi coenam nuptias gloriae."

<sup>1045</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes in Ioannem*, cap. 2, coll. 8, no. 5; VI, p. 545. "Sunt nuptiae spirituales Dei et animae; et hae possent intelligi convenienter per nuptias factas in Cana Galilaeae."

<sup>1046</sup> Bonaventurre, *Comment in Ionnem*, cap. 2, nos. 1 & 2; VI, p. 269. "Ratione huius vocatus fuit etiam Dominus...Chrysostomus : 'Vocatus est ad nuptias, non ut aliquis magnus, sed ut consanguineus.'"



which Our Lady was *not* invited and the wedding of the individual soul to God, to which she ought to be invited, are closely related, because St. Bonaventure, after saying it is good to invite her to one's banquet, says she brings to the poor of the banquet, the consolation of compassion, the counsel of instruction, and the suffrage of prayer. She showed compassion when she said, "They have no wine," instruction, when she said, "Do whatever he tells you," and the privilege of prayer when she obtained from her Son the miracle of converting water into wine.<sup>1047</sup> In the spiritual nuptials of God and the soul, Our Lord turns the water of tears into the wine of consolation, "especially if the Mother of Jesus is there."<sup>1048</sup>

However, her effectiveness is not restricted to helping individuals, according to the Seraphic Doctor. He also attributes these cosmic results to her: as Jesus changed the tasteless and unnourishing water into delicious and pleasant wine, so he changes the shadow of the Law into truth. He changes the variety of sacrifices into unity, the harshness of penalties into joy, riddles into light, terrors into love, promises into attainment. "And these things were done at the prayers of the Virgin, when she interceded."<sup>1049</sup>

Mary's helpful, loving presence at the small wedding at Cana was a symbol of her participation in Christ's Redemption of the entire world.

### The Cult of Mary, according to Bonaventure

#### Contemporary Catholic teaching and vocabulary

Mary is related to Jesus and to us. How do we relate to Mary? Certainly we ought to have and show respect. But what degree of respect? The reverence we show to God is called "latria." This latria is extended to the humanity of Christ and to his images. Mary is Mother of God. Should latria be extended to her? Veneration in some other degree?

The Church distinguishes the cult due Mary from that due God, restricting, today, the term "adoration" to the honor given God. For instance, Vatican II says, "This cult [given Mary. L. Gl.]...differs essentially from the cult of adoration, which is offered equally to the Incarnate Word and to the Father and the Holy Spirit..."<sup>1050</sup> The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994) says, "To adore God is to acknowledge him as God, as the Creator and Savior, the Lord

<sup>1047</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes in Joannem*, cap. 2, coll. 9; VI, p. 547.

<sup>1048</sup> Bonaventure, *Collationes in Joannem*, cap. 2, coll. 8; VI, p. 543.

<sup>1049</sup> Bonaventure, *Comment in Joannem*, czp. 2, no. 12; VI, pp. 270f. "Et haec facta sunt ad preces Virginis, ipsa intercedente."

<sup>1050</sup> *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen gentium)*, n. 66; Flannery, *Vatican Council II*, p. 421.



and Master of everything that exists, as infinite and merciful Love. 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve...' <sup>1051</sup> Tavad puts it, "*Latria* generally designates the attitude of worship that is due only to God. *Dulia* corresponds to the honor that should be appropriately rendered to the saints." <sup>1052</sup> Catholic usage, sanctioned at the Second Council of Nicea, allows veneration to images. "Whoever venerates an image venerates the person portrayed in it." <sup>1053</sup> Contemporary Catholic usage, for anyone not familiar with it, is summed up well in the article "Adoration" in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*:

This cult of adoration may and can be paid only to the one true God, ...This cult of adoration is called *latria* (adoration in its strict sense) ...It is to be sharply distinguished from the cult of *dulia*, which is veneration by which the saints are honored, ...It is likewise to be distinguished from *hyperdulia*, by which Mary, the Mother of God, is venerated in a special measure.

#### Bonaventure's vocabulary

Unfortunately for simplicity or consistency, the Seraphic Doctor uses these words differently:

...In Bonaventure's vocabulary at this point, the word 'adoration' is used in a broad sense: it can cover *dulia* as well as *latria*; but it is distinguished from veneration or honor, in that it is a special form of *oratio*, or prayer, which, as he explains, veneration is not. <sup>1054</sup>

But, since adoration, like speech, is seen only among beings capable of reason – for adoration is a kind of prayer... <sup>1055</sup>

#### The Historical Background of the Seraphic Doctor

Tavad says: "Bonaventure's broad approach to the question is clearly dependent on a problematic that had dominated Christian life and thought in the Western Church since the time of Emperor Charlemagne. This problematic may be briefly illustrated with the help of the 'Caroline books,'..." <sup>1056</sup>

These are books by theologians of the court of Charlemagne, criticizing, as they understood it, the cult of icons taught by the Second Council of Nicea and the veneration it allowed these sacred paintings. They follow the letter

<sup>1051</sup> (United States Catholic Conference: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, St. Paul Books and Media) 1994, no. 2096.

<sup>1052</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 98.

<sup>1053</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 2132; p. 517.

<sup>1054</sup> Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 98; Cf. Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, III, a. 1, q. 4, conclus.; III, 208.

<sup>1055</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 9, a. 1, q. 4. Conclus.; III, p. 207; cf. p. 208. Sed quoniam adoratio sicut allocutio videtur solum inter res rationis capaces – adoratio enim quaedam oratio est...

<sup>1056</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 96.

from Pope Gregory the Great to the Bishop of Marseille, saying pictures are for instruction and to nurture devotion but have no place in worship. Tavard admits "These books are never directly quoted by Bonaventure,"<sup>1057</sup> and, when he permitted latria to images of Christ, he was "going far beyond Gregory's letter and the Caroline books..."<sup>1058</sup>

- Bonaventure on the Honor due Christ

With regard to the human nature of Christ, the Seraphic Doctor says if we consider the whole man, because that man is God, he is to be adored with latria, because of the unity of the Person. If "flesh" is considered as a part of the humanity, not as united to God, it deserves, not the cult of latria but dulia. If "flesh" designates the created nature as united to the divinity, some say it should be venerated with hyperdulia. Others, that it should receive latria, since honor is paid not to one part or another but looks to the person. Royal purple receives royal honor. Bonaventure himself says not only Christ the man should be worshipped with latria but also his humanity should be so venerated, even though, considered by itself it would deserve only dulia, because it is always to be considered as conjoined.<sup>1059</sup>

- Honor Paid to Images

With regard to images of Christ, the Franciscan Master teaches, in the words of Tavard:

The image is meant to "represent the one who was crucified for us"; it is not given to us "for itself but for him." Therefore, "all the reverence which is exhibited to it is shown to Christ," who himself deserves latria. This is supported by Augustine in *De doctrina christiana*, ch. 9. Bonaventure repeats this point in his answers to objections. : "When the image is adored, it is not adored by virtue of the nobility it has in itself but by virtue of the nobility it signifies in itself...."<sup>1060</sup>

- Cult of Christ's Cross

With regard to the cross of Christ, the true Cross and fragments from it, the Seraphic Doctor has a slightly different teaching. It is due latria by reason

<sup>1057</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 96.

<sup>1058</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. 99.

<sup>1059</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, III, d. 9, a. 1, q. 1.; III, pp.200f.; Cf. Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 97-99.

<sup>1060</sup> *Ibid.*



of the Crucified and, for itself, it may receive veneration, as an instrument of our salvation.<sup>1061</sup>

# • Reverence for Scripture

Admittedly, images can be an occasion of abuse and of idolatry. But so can Scripture.<sup>1062</sup>

Tavard quotes the Saint comparing images to Scripture:

Although the sacred Letters have been and are to this date, at times, an occasion of error, they should not for that reason be erased and creatures destroyed, because it pertains to the divine judgment that they be for the good of those who are good and also for the evil of those who are evil. And so should one think about images.<sup>1063</sup>

## The Honor to Be Given to Mary, according to St. Bonaventure

Can Mary receive any cult? (St. Bonaventure uses the word "adoratio" to include both latria to God and dulia toward worthy creatures, though this would horrify Counter-Reformation Catholics.<sup>1064</sup>) He does not consider any possibility that no cult at all might be due her. He considers, and discards, the possibility that she be given the cult of latria. Mary is a creature: latria is not fitting for a creature. But she is Mother of God, which is the most excellent title possible for a creature, is raised above all other creatures, and so deserves a special cult. This honor is called by the scholars, "hyperdulia."

Latria is offered to images of Christ: why not to his Mother? The Seraphic Doctor says the honor given to the image is referred to Christ as its subject. Honor given Mary is referred to Christ as its end. He who honors the image of Christ, honors Christ alone. He who honors the Mother of Christ honors both Christ and his Mother. The saint thus, tersely, dismisses any equality between Mary and images of Christ. Tavard discusses St. Bonaventure's thought on this. According to Tavard:

<sup>1061</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, III, d. 9, a. 1, q. 4, conclus.; III, p. 208; cf. Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 103-105.

<sup>1062</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 99f.; cf. Bonaventure, *In Sent.* III, d. 9, art. 1, q. 2, conclus. & ad 3; III, 203f.

<sup>1063</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, III, d. 9, a. 1, q. 2, ad 5; III, p. 204; in Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 100.

<sup>1064</sup> "To adore God is to acknowledge him as God, as the Creator and Savior, the Lord and Master of everything that exists, as infinite and merciful Love. 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve . . .'" *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2096.



'One who adores the image of Christ adores Christ, not the image; but one who adores (sic: see above) the Mother of Christ adores both Christ and his mother.' One and the same veneration<sup>1065</sup> of the Virgin includes adoration of Christ by *latria* as its main and final purpose and adoration of Mary by *dulia*. Thus the cult of Mary is not a simple affair. Because of the analogous meaning of adoration [acc. to Bonaventure; L. Gl.] and the twofold attitude that is intrinsic to its practice, it may easily turn into a source of confusion.<sup>1066</sup>

The saint uses "adoration" for both *latria* and *dulia* but restricts it to rational creatures. The irrational cross may receive, in itself, "veneration," not "adoration." Though the Saint restricts "adoration" to the rational, he does not restrict "veneration" to the irrational.

...Honor is shown to someone in two ways: sometimes in the deference of reverence and this is the honor of veneration; sometimes in testimony of virtue and in laboring to please, and this is the honor of adoration. Both of these honors are offered to the cross itself. For we adore the cross and we venerate the cross; but in this there is a difference, that the honor of veneration is shown to the cross itself as the instrument of our salvation ... But the honor of adoration is offered to the cross of Christ by reason of the Crucified — no one intends to please it, or to obtain something from it but from him who was fastened to it, and so only the adoration of *latria* is due it — Thus two kinds of honor are due the cross of Christ, and one indeed is *latria* but the other ought not to be called either *latria* or *dulia*, because it is not a kind of adoration but can be called the honor of veneration.<sup>1067</sup>

Though the Saint restricts "adoration" to the rational, he does not restrict "veneration" to the irrational.

...Christ did not adore her [Mary, L. Gl.] with the adoration of *latria* but of *hyperdulia* — for he did not adore her as a goddess but as a Son his Mother — therefore it follows well that Christ teaches [us, L. Gl.] to adore and venerate his Mother as befits the Mother of God.<sup>1068</sup>

<sup>1065</sup> Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, III, d. 9, a. 1, q. 4, conclus.; III, pp. 207f.; cf. Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 103f. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2132.

<sup>1066</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 102; Bonaventure, *In Sent.*, III, d. 9, a. 1, q. 3, ad 1; III, p. 206.

<sup>1067</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, q. 9, a. 1, d. 4; III, p. 208. ...Duplici modo exhibetur alicui honor: aliquando in obsequium reverentiae, et iste est honor venerationis; aliquando in testimonium virtutis et famulatum complacentiae, et iste est honor adorationis. Uterque autem honor istorum offertur ipsi cruci. Nam crucem adoramus et crucem veneramus; sed in hoc est differentia, quod honor venerationis exhibetur ipsi cruci Christi ratione Crucifixi — nemo ei intendit ei Honor autem adorationis offertur ipsi cruci Christi ratione Crucifixi — nemo ei intendit ei placere, vel aliquid impetrare ab ea, sed ei qui in ea affixus fuit, et sic non debetur ei nisi adoratio *latriae* — Sic igitur cruci Christi duplex honor debetur, et unus quidem est *latria*, alius vero non debet dici nec *latria* nec *dulia*, quia non est species adorationis sed vocari potest honor venerationis.

<sup>1068</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, q. 9, a. 1, q. 3, c; III, p. 206. ...Christus non adoravit eam [Mariam, L. Gl.] adoratione *latriae* sed *hyperduliae* — non enim adoravit eam ut deam sed ut



- The Concept of "Sign"

Tavard says, "Bonaventure's operative category in determining what kind of cult may be due to Christ, to Mary, and to saints in general, is the category of 'sign.'" <sup>1069</sup>

...The signs that are only signs keep nothing for themselves of the honor that is offered them: all honor is passed on to the model or archetype whom they signify, namely, to Christ in his divinity. But the signs that are also persons in their own right, like the Virgin and the saints, do not transmit to Christ all the honor they receive, for some of this honor properly pertains to them as persons. The cult of *latria* must go to God only. Yet the saints, including the Virgin, receive in their own name a cult of *dulia*, or deep respect and veneration, on account of their life and the holiness which they exemplify. Because of Mary's nearness to her divine Son, however, she receives *hyperdulia*. That is, the honor addressed to her goes first of all to her Son: she acts as a sign directing her devotees to the Incarnation. And whatever honor goes to her own person is addressed to her in thanksgiving for the great actions that God performed in and through her. <sup>1070</sup>

To the claim that the Mother of God is also the mother of all creatures, Bonaventure replies she has a "dominion of presidency," not one "of majesty and omnipotence." Thus, she has no right to *latria*. Some say "The flesh of Christ is consubstantial with that of the Virgin." But Christ's flesh deserves *latria* as flesh assumed by the Divine Word. Also, Christ honored his Mother. The Saint replies he honored her with *hyperdulia*, not with *latria*. So should we. "According to the law of justice and the proper order,' adoration [sic: see above] of, and love for, Mary should be infinitely below those that are due to the Son." <sup>1071</sup>

- Actual Practice of Devotion to Mary, according to Bonaventure

This cult of *hyperdulia* should be actively offered to Our Lady, according to the Saint. In his *Rule of Novices*, he commands several prayers to Our Lady, the Office of the Virgin on double feasts, the *Salve Regina* as part of the daily office, *Ave Marias* at various times, e.g. at meals, and, daily one hundred Pa-

filium matrem suam — ideo bene sequitur quod Christus vere Matrem suam docet adorare et venerari sicut decet Matrem Dei.

<sup>1069</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 107.

<sup>1070</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 107f.

<sup>1071</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 101-103; Bonaventure, *In Sent.* III, d. 9, a. 1, q. 3; III, pp. 205-206.

ter Nosters and *Ave Marias*, with genuflections.<sup>1072</sup> Tavard comments, "This is undoubtedly the early form of the Rosary which was familiar to Bonaventure."<sup>1073</sup>

### A Comparison between St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas on Honor to Mary

St. Thomas seems to be more in harmony with twentieth-century usage than Bonaventure: "...The adoration of latria is not due her, but only the veneration of dulia.... Not any kind of dulia, but hyperdulia."<sup>1074</sup> St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure seem to be in essential agreement, especially when they use the three words, "latria," "dulia," and "hyperdulia." Mary should receive hyperdulia, not latria. There may be a less important difference in their use of "adoration," and "veneration." Aquinas seems to restrict "adoration" to latria; Bonaventure extends it to all three. Bonaventure seems to use "veneration" more for irrational creatures. More importantly, Tavard sees the Franciscan as having a stronger, more Byzantine appreciation of sacred images. Tavard says Bonaventure's operative category for determining the cult due creatures is the category of "sign." And images are truly signs.

### 3. Summary and Comparison on the Relation of Motherhood

#### RELATION TILL NOW, BASED ON THE PAST

St. Thomas said Mary has a real relation of motherhood to Jesus although he has only a mental relation of sonship to her. She is rightly called Mother of God. In the *Summa*, he sees the Divine Maternity as affecting Mary's being in its ontological personality. In the *Sentences*, he had said Mary's motherhood was of infinite perfection only relatively. In the *Summa*, he said, more directly, that she has a certain infinite dignity and nothing could be better than she.

The Divine Maternity, beginning at the Annunciation, brought Mary a further sanctification. And she brought grace to all by giving birth to Christ. She is honored with hyperdulia.

St. Bonaventure agrees that Mary is Mother of God because she conceived and bore a Divine Person. Consequently, she is really related to Jesus, though he is related only virtually, that is, mentally, to her. The Divine Maternity brought her into special relations with all the persons of the Trinity and nec-

<sup>1072</sup> Bonaventure, *Regula Novitiorum*, VIII, Chap. 5, no. 2, p. 482 Chap. 1, no. 3, p. 476; in *Selecta scripta S. Bonaventurae* (Quarraci: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1942)

<sup>1073</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 148.

<sup>1074</sup> Aquinas, III, q. 25, a. 5, c. "...Non debetur ei [Mariae. L.Gl.] adoratio latriae sed solum veneratio duliae: ...Non qualiscumque dulia, sed hyperdulia."



essarily endowed her with the greatest gifts of grace and nobility. She receives hyperdulia, not latria.

The Seraphic Doctor teaches Mary had to die because, he believed, she had original sin and because she was subordinate to her Son, who died. She remained incorrupt because she had never sinned and was assumed bodily to heaven because this would bring her greater happiness and because her conversion to Christ was more noble than that of other Christians. He held the Assumption of Mary was absolutely unique, while St. Thomas has no difficulty with the pious belief in the assumption of others, such as St. John the Evangelist.

Human nature is, of itself, neither mortal nor immortal, according to the Seraphic Doctor, but is made immortal by original justice. St. Thomas holds the body is by nature mortal, being composed of distinct elements. This difference affects, to some extent, their view of original sin and the fate of Mary's body.

Like St. Thomas, Bonaventure does not develop the Spiritual Maternity of Mary to the extent theologians have since. The words from the cross, "Behold thy son ... behold thy mother," are taken by both Doctors to refer strictly and solely to Mary and John. He is to care for her, she to rely on him. Motherhood is based on the parallel with Eve. "As Eve is the mother of Abel and of all of us, so the Christian people has the Virgin as its mother."<sup>1075</sup> Tavard bears witness to this:

...By an afterthought which was not essential to the main point [Behold your Son, *Jesus*. whose sacrificial death you consent to and co-offer; L. Gl.], but which expressed Jesus' last human care for his mother, the disciple whom Jesus loved was given a mother to look after.

It is therefore not through a spiritual reading of this text ["Behold ... behold; L. Gl.] that Bonaventure concludes to a symbolic motherhood of Mary for the faithful. Only a further extension of the parallel Eve-Mary leads the Seraphic Doctor to this point.<sup>1076</sup>

St. Thomas says much the same:

But since it was fitting to seek that his mother, crushed by grief, be taken care of, since he was going away, he handed her over to the disciple whom he loved, who would take good care of her. Christ made a testament from the cross and divided family duties between mother and disciple. The Lord founded not only a public testament but also a domestic one.<sup>1077</sup>

<sup>1075</sup> "Et sicut Eva mater est Abel et omnium nostrum, ita populus Christianus habet matrem Virginem." Bonaventure, *Collationes de Donis Spiritus Sancti*, coll. 6, no. 20; V, p. 487; Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 178.

<sup>1076</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 178.

<sup>1077</sup> Aquinas, *Catena*, c. 29, p. 628. "Quia vero conveniens erat matrem existentem dolore oppressam procuracionem quaerere, quia ipse aberat; discipulo qui diligebatur tradidit diligentiam



The Seraphic Doctor speaks of the foundations of a maternal relationship. We are her debtors, she our benefactor, because she has given us the greatest gift in bearing Christ. And we are to imitate Mary. "Istam coronam habebimus, si volumus Virginem gloriosam imitari."<sup>1078</sup> Both saints, in their sermons, speak of Mary being ready and able to help us but without much explanation of her power or its mode of derivation, except that Bonaventure says it is hierarchical, following the medieval desire to understand things by putting them into their place in the ordered universe. Bonaventure does tell of Our Lady intervening just before the death of a "hard-necked" ["*durae cervicis*"] monk, placing a drop of Christ's blood, "which you had from me," on the judgment balance, winning the battle with Satan.<sup>1079</sup> To find a similar anecdote, Tavard had to go to the portal of the north transept of the Cathedral of Notre Dame.<sup>1080</sup> This suggests a certain paucity in the words of the Seraphic Doctor himself.

While St. Bonaventure does speak of Our Lady as "mother" "O how loving a mother we have! Let us conform to our mother..."<sup>1081</sup> his treatment of Mary's motherhood of all the faithful is a bit meager. Tavard says of it:

One should readily admit that this [motherhood of faithful; L. Gl.] is not a frequent theme in the works of Bonaventure. It is even rare. Yet it should not be neglected, because, if the notion that Mary is in some sense a mother to the faithful does not function as a principle in Bonaventure's Mariology, it has the quality of a conclusion. It sums up a point which he regards as important, namely that the faithful must follow Christ and, in so doing, will imitate the Virgin through whom the Lord came to them. This itself derives directly from the contrasting parallel between Eve and Mary.<sup>1082</sup>

This *indirect* imitation of Mary — imitating her only by imitating Christ — would be unsatisfactory to many today, not only the simple devout but sophisticated theologians.

We can rejoice at the progress since. One example, including Protestants, is the ecumenical statement from Saragossa in 1979:

As a Christian can and should pray for others, we believe that the saints who have already entered into the fullness which is Christ, amongst whom Mary holds the first place, can and do pray for us sinners who are still struggling on earth...<sup>1083</sup>

habituro;... Testabatur de cruce Christus, et inter matrem atque discipulum dividebat pietatis officia. Condebat Dominus non solum publicum, sed etiam domesticum testamentum."

<sup>1078</sup> Bonaventure, *De Donis Spiritus Sancti Collatio VI*, n. 24; V, p. 489.

<sup>1079</sup> Bonaventure, *De Donis Spiritus*, Coll. VII, no. 3; V, pp. 489f.

<sup>1080</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, p. 180.

<sup>1081</sup> Bonaventure, *De Donis Spiritus*, Coll. VI, n. 21; V, p. 487. "O quam piam matrem habemus! Configuremus nos matri nostrae..."

<sup>1082</sup> Tavard, *Forthbringer*, pp. 176f.

<sup>1083</sup> Ecumenical Statement, International Mariological Congress, Saragossa, 1979, in "Marking 30: Theology, Mary, Christian unity," E. Carroll, *Hopes and Visions: Papers of the Ecumenical*



FINAL STAGE OF THE RELATION BETWEEN MARY AND JESUS, ACCORDING TO  
BONAVENTURE

In his *Soliloquy on the Four Mental Exercises*. St. Bonaventure contrasts Mary's present beatitude with the sorrows of her earthly life:

O soul, ...there still remains one [vision]...which wonderfully brings joy to the minds of all spirits, and which admirably inebriates every blessed creature with I-know-not-what inestimable joy: this is the vision of the deiform radiance of the heavenly Queen and of the glorified humanity of her most blessed Offspring. Who, O my soul, can sufficiently conceive what joy comes from seeing this Mother of mercy, the Queen of piety and clemency, no longer lying with the child who is wailing in the manger, whom all the choirs of angels now serve as their Lady;<sup>1084</sup> no longer going about and seeking with tears the most beloved young Son whom she had lost for three days but now beholding him in eternal joy; no longer disturbed, fleeing with him into Egypt from the face of Herod, because he has ascended into heaven and Herod has descended into hell; no longer distraught because of the many things which the Jews did to her Son, because all things are subject to him; certainly no longer wailing, shouting, and crying aloud: "Who will grant me to die for thee, my Son?" while she stood near her only-begotten Son, dying and hanging on the gibbet of the cross; no longer lamenting tearfully when there was given her "a disciple for the Master, a servant for the Lord,"<sup>1085</sup> ... almost a stranger for the only-begotten and sweetest Son: but [seeing] her who once, for our sake, [was] so wretched, so full of sorrows, now inestimably exalted above the choirs of angels and every creature, reigning with Christ, her Son, in the palace of the Trinity.<sup>1086</sup>

*Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the United States of America, 1996)

<sup>1084</sup> Transl. Tavad, *Forthbringer*, p. 161.

<sup>1085</sup> Bernard, *Sermo in Dominica infra Oct. Assumt. B. M. Virg.*, n. 15; PL 185; cited in Quaracchi Bonaventure, VIII, p. 66, n.1. Anima, ...est ...adhuc una [visio(L.Gl.)], ...quae mirabiliter omnium spirituum mentes laetificat et miro quodam, nescio quo inaeestimabili gaudio omnem beatam creaturam inebriat, videre scilicet illius caelestis Reginae deificam claritatem et suae beatissimae Proles glorificatam humanitatem. Quis, o anima, vel cogitare sufficiat, quantum gaudium generat, illam Matrem misericordiae, Regnam pietatis et clementiae videre, iam non recumbentes cum parvulo vagiente in prasepio, cui omnes chori Angelorum modo famulantur ut dominae; iam non circumeuntem et quarentem cum lacrymis Filium, cum perdiderat dilectissimum infantulum in triduo, sed eum nunc insipientem in sempiterno gaudio; iam non turbatam cum eo fugientem in Aegyptum a facie Herodis, quia ipse ascendit in caelum, et Herodes descendit in infernum; iam non turbatam erga plurima, quae fecerunt Filio suo Iudaei, quia *omnia subiecta sunt ei*; certe iam non eiulantem, vociferantem et clamantem: *Quis mihi del ut moriar pro te, fili mi?* cum staret prope unigenitum Filium suum morientem et pendentem in crucis patibulo; iam non lamentantem lacrymabiliter, cum sibi daretur "discipulus pro magistro, servus pro Domino."

<sup>1086</sup> Bonaventure, *Soliloquium de quatuor mentalibus exercitiis*, cap. 4, # 5, 26; VIII, p. 65. quasi alienus pro unigenito et dulcissimo Filio: sed hanc quondam propter nos tam miseram,



### Excursus: Some Ill-Conceived Ideas Of "Consequences"

Many today zealously promote, and petition the Pope for, the definition of Mary as co-redemptrix, mediatrix of all grace, and advocate.

In a discussion by the faculty of the Marianum, a Roman university, together with other Roman mariologists, on August 28, 1998, several concerns were raised. It was said that all three titles, Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix, and Advocate, lack a univocal meaning. For example, the term "mediatrix" has a different meaning in Eastern theology from that in Western. It is asked whether these titles are ontological, referring to an action of Mary that was determining and necessary for Redemption, like her *fiat*? Or are they functional, describing her cooperation in the Redemption?

From the biblical viewpoint, all three titles refer properly to Christ. *He* is the Redeemer, with nothing lacking or even able to be added to his perfect act of Redemption, even though he has joined Mary and all Christians to his saving work. "...And there is only one mediator between God and mankind, ...Christ Jesus."<sup>1087</sup> And he is our Advocate: "...We have our advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ."<sup>1088</sup> These New Testament texts seem *not* to support the concepts of a creaturely Co-Redeemer, Co-Mediator, or Co-Advocate.

Other texts *do* support these roles. St. Paul says, "We are fellow workers with God."<sup>1089</sup> The Bible tells us of others obviously mediating between us and God, like Moses with arms upraised to God against the Amalekites.<sup>1090</sup> There are many such mediators, including even you and me: 'There should be prayers offered for everyone – petitions, intercessions, and thanksgiving – and especially for kings and others in authority.'<sup>1091</sup> Others may mediate but always in subordination and dependence on the One Mediator *par excellence*. Vatican II says, "...The Church is driven by the Holy Spirit to do her part for the full realization of the plan of God,..."<sup>1092</sup> We are all called to cooperate in Christ's work of redemption, mediation, and advocacy, in a real and efficacious way. Mary,

in a wholly singular way ...cooperated in the work of the Savior in restoring supernatural life to souls....Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal

tot moeroribus plenam, iam nunc inaestimabiliter super choro Angelorum et omnem creaturam exaltatam, regnantem cum Christo Filio suo in Trinitatis palatio.

<sup>1087</sup> 1 Tim. 2: 5. *Jerusalem Bible*.

<sup>1088</sup> 1 John, 2: 1.

<sup>1089</sup> 1 Cor., 3: 9.

<sup>1090</sup> Exodus, 17:11.

<sup>1091</sup> 1 Tim. 2:1,2.

<sup>1092</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Flannery, 17.



salvation.... Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper Benefactress, and Mediatrix.<sup>1093</sup>

The faculty of the Marianum says, of the three titles above, "Among theologians, they raise many questions to which there is not a readily agreeable answer." They say the doctrine of Mary's cooperation in Christ's saving work has been "formally, repeatedly, and authoritatively taught by both the extraordinary ...and the ordinary ...magisterium..."<sup>1094</sup> Catholic theologians do not contest any essential element of this teaching, which is proclaimed in the liturgy and in popular devotions. The proposal of a dogmatic definition of these particular titles perplexes theologians and threatens ecumenical progress. Much theological and biblical study is still needed about this proposal, according to the distinguished faculty.

The International Mariological Commission at Czestochowa, June 18-24, 1997, said of the proposed definition of the three titles: "1) The terms are in need of theological clarification; 2) it is not opportune to abandon the path marked out by the Vatican Council II and proceed to the definition of a new dogma."<sup>1095</sup>

Canon René Laurentin argues against the requested definition, saying Pius XII planned to define Mary as Mediatrix of all Graces.

But for many reasons, the theologians of the Holy Office dissuaded him from doing so. Was Mary truly the mediatrix of all graces? What about those in the Old Testament before she existed? What about sanctifying grace, which is the immediate communication of God's life in us? Pius XII gave up the idea.<sup>1096</sup>

As for "Co-redeemer," Laurentin says many theologians oppose the title because it suggests equality with Christ, the only Redeemer. It causes other difficulties, such as confusing the Holy Spirit, the Co-Redeemer at the divine level with human cooperators or co-redeemers, of whom Mary is first and highest, who cooperate in and through the Holy Spirit.<sup>1097</sup> It would cause tension with the East, since "co-redemptrix" is "a title foreign to the Orthodox tradition."<sup>1098</sup> "The title of advocate also brings problems. Jesus gave the title to the Holy Spirit alone. If Mary can also be said to be our advocate, it is in Christ

<sup>1093</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, Flannery, 61, 62.

<sup>1094</sup> "The Marianum's position on the dogmatic definition," *Marianum Notizie-News*, February, 1998; reprinted in *The Marian Library Newsletter*, 38 (Summer, 1999): p. 4.

<sup>1095</sup> "Summer reports of a new Marian dogma," *Osservatore Romano*, June 25 & 26, 1997. Reprinted in *The Marian Library Newsletter*, 35 (Winter, 1997-98): p. 5. The opposing view and publications, in 1993, 1995, and 1996, of Dr. M. Miravalle are mentioned here, p. 7.

<sup>1096</sup> R. Laurentin, "Something to consider before you sign," *The Tablet*, January 31, 1998; reprinted in *The Marian Library Newsletter* 36 (1998): p.4.

<sup>1097</sup> Laurentin, *ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>1098</sup> Laurentin, *ibid.*, p. 5.



and the Holy Spirit. It would unbalance things to define this title solemnly for her when that of the Holy Spirit is misunderstood or ignored by the faithful."<sup>1099</sup>

Many see these three titles, Co-Redeemer, Mediatrix of all Graces, and Advocate as logical consequences of Mary's maternal relation to Jesus. But certain difficulties remain to be solved before the Church should proceed to solemn definition.

#### Excursus: Mary's Relation to the Trinity

Wroblewski compares Hans Urs von Balthasar with St. Bonaventure, saying they both saw Mary as archetype of the relation between the Trinity and the soul. He quotes first Urs von Balthasar:

How rich the first biblical revelation of the Trinity is in this respect, namely the account of the annunciation! There we see, in the three stages of the dialogue with the angel, Mary (the believing Sion, and therefore the type of the Church) initiated into her own particular form of service: the Lord is with you, you shall bear a son (who will be called Son of the Most High, and will rule the house of Jacob), the Holy Ghost will overshadow you (and behold, your cousin Elizabeth also...) Each successive revelation of the divine mystery is occasioned by a fresh demand on Mary and her assent to it: the Trinity emerges in the context of her obedience, her virginal state, and the New Testament contains no revelation of it that falls outside this context. Mary's attitude is, indeed, one of contemplation, but of a kind that is, at its source, one conjoined with the action of her loving response; it is a contemplation which "keeps all these things in her heart," only to bring forth what she has been given and contemplated and hand them on to the world. Likewise the gospels are the fruit of contemplation, brought forth from the womb of the primitive Church, and, for this reason, they cannot give us any other image of the Trinity than the marian one, that is to say, embodied in the actual life of these persons depicted in revelation, principally of the incarnate God himself, and explicable only in that context.<sup>1100</sup>

Wroblewski compares this to Bonaventure's words:

Hence, if the cure was to be universal, it was wholly becoming that angel, woman and man should concur in the mystery of the incarnation: the angel as herald, the Virgin as the conceiver, and the Man as the conceived Offspring. The angel Gabriel was the herald of the eternal Father, the Immaculate Virgin was the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and the conceived Offspring was the very Person of the Word. The representatives of all three hierarchies – divine, angelic, and human – concurred in this way in the universal restoration, suggesting not only the Trinity of God, but also the universality of the boon, and the generosity of the supreme Restorer. Now, generosity is appropriated to the Holy Spirit, and so is

<sup>1099</sup> Laurentin, *ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>1100</sup> H. Urs von Balthasar, *Word and redemption: essays in theology*, 2 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965), 71. In Wroblewski, 46f.c



the sanctification of the Virgin in whose womb the Word was conceived. Therefore, although the incarnation is the work of the whole Trinity, by appropriation we say that the Virgin conceived of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1101</sup>

Wroblewski comments: "Balthasar is more explicit about the dialogue of love and response, but Bonaventure is explicit about the Trinity's loving initiative and Mary's loving consent. The Trinitarian framework looms large in both accounts...."<sup>1102</sup>

Cantalamesa sees the blood and water flowing from Jesus' pierced side as the Johannine Pentecost, a sign of the giving of the Spirit. This is the same Spirit which hovered over the waters in Genesis. The death of Jesus is the new creation. Mary, the other women, and John, were beneath the cross to receive the first fruits of the Spirit. This is what the evangelist most likely intended to teach the Church. When he had given his Mother into St. John's care (and he into hers), he knew his mission was finished. Now the Church was born in the persons of Mary, the mother and John, the believer.

The act through which Jesus fulfilled his mission was to show that his mother was the "Woman," the eschatological Daughter of Zion spoken of by the prophets and who is therefore the figure of the Church.... On the cross Jesus manifested his supreme love when, in the person of his Mother and beloved disciple, he constituted the new people of God and gave them the gift of the Spirit.<sup>1103</sup>

St. Basil said souls full of the Holy Spirit spread grace like "those limpid and transparent bodies which, when struck by the sun's rays, become radiant themselves and illuminate others."<sup>1104</sup> The ancient Fathers used to call these persons "pneumatophoroi," "Spirit-bearing." Our Lady is the greatest of these.

<sup>1101</sup> Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, pars 4, cap. 3; V, p. 243. ...Ut medicamentum sit commune omnibus, decentissimum fuit, quod ad incarnationis mysterium fieret concursus Angeli, mulieris et viri; Angeli ut denunciatis, mulieris Virginis ut concipientis, viri vero ut conceptae proles; ut sic Angelus Gabriel essent nuntius Patris aeterni, Virgo immaculata esset templum Spiritus sancti, proles concepta esset ipsa persona Verbi; ac per hoc in communi reparatione omnium communis fieret concursus trium de triplici hierarchia, scilicet divina, angelica, et humana, ad insinuandam non solum Trinitatem Dei, verum etiam generalitatem beneficii et liberalitatem reparatoris summi. Et quoniam liberalitas Spiritui sancto appropriatur et sanctificatio Virginis, in qua peracta fuit Verbi conceptio; hinc est, quod licet opus illud sit a tota Trinitate, per appropriationem tamen dicitur Virgo concepisse de Spiritu sancto. Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, trans. J. de Vrink, *The Works of Bonaventure* IIC (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1963) IV, 3, 4, 151f.

<sup>1102</sup> Wroblewski, 48.cc

<sup>1103</sup> I. De la Potterie, "Le symbolisme du sang et de l'eau en Jean 19: 34," *Didaskalia* 14(1984) 217f.; in Cantalamessa, *Mary: mirror of the Church*, 190f.

<sup>1104</sup> St. Basil, "On the Holy Spirit", 9, 23, in Cantalamessa, 196.



This we know from the experience of the Church. Luther said of her, "No other image of woman fills man with such pure thoughts as this virgin."<sup>1105</sup>

Mary's enduring relation to Christ brings about an enduring relation to the Church. She is the model of the Church in its (future) perfection but not like "models who stand still to be photographed or painted and the more still they stand the better they are. Mary is an active model, helping us to imitate her." Like an alpine guide, she both leads and then waits for us who follow, going back to help when needed, especially over the final "mountain pass" of "leaving our self-love behind to enter into God's love."<sup>1106</sup>

Tavard says:

As one of us, Mary is indeed our neighbor. "By the word, neighbor, one understands every human person of either sex, of whatever dignity, of whatever virtue. Whence love for the glorious Virgin is included under love for the neighbor."<sup>1107</sup> Mary is "next to us in conformity of nature;" and love – "dilection" – is always related to similarity. Our love therefore goes to the Virgin, not because she is to be venerated or for the graces she received from God, but simply because she is one of us. This of course does not rule out the veneration to which her mission entitles her. She is indeed "above us," due to "the dignity of grace and of the most noble conception"<sup>1108</sup> of her Son.<sup>1109</sup>

Mary's relation to the Son, brought about by the Holy Spirit, bound her more closely to the Father and to the oneness of the Trinity as a whole.

#### Excursus: Relation to Contemporary Ecumenical Theology

The place of Our Lady in doctrine and in piety is one of the points of greatest divergence among Christians, especially the most recently defined doctrine, the Assumption, as well as the slightly earlier Immaculate Conception. The ecumenical search for unity drives us to re-examine all such points. Tavard asks: "Is it not possible that a greater knowledge of the older Marian tradition of the Catholic Church may suggest insights on how the contemporary hurdles may be by-passed?"<sup>1110</sup> He refers primarily to St. Bonaventure. St. Thomas must surely be included in that "older Marian tradition."

<sup>1105</sup> Luther, *Sermons on the Gospels (Kirchenpostille)* (ed. Weimar 10, 1, 68,) in Cantalamessa, 196.

<sup>1106</sup> Cantalamessa, p. 197.

<sup>1107</sup> Bonaventure, *In III Sent.*, d. 28, dub. 2; III, p. 634.

<sup>1108</sup> Bonaventure, *Ibid.*

<sup>1109</sup> *Forthbringer*, pp. 4f.

<sup>1110</sup> *Forthbringer*, p. vi.

## CONCLUSIONS

### Conclusions of Part One

The first part of the thesis states that the two Doctors have very different theologies, in general. It has been shown that St. Bonaventure, following the Greek Fathers, relates creatures to the Father, through the exemplary Word. St. Thomas, following St. Augustine, relates creatures to the divine nature. St. Bonaventure accepts Aristotle grudgingly, St. Thomas wholeheartedly. Bonaventure's theology is affective, St. Thomas's is demonstrative. Bonaventure holds all things are intelligible only in Christ. Therefore there is really only one science, theology, which includes all knowledge. St. Thomas holds that creatures have some, though limited, intelligibility in themselves. For him, theology is finite, is one science among many, not the one universal science, absorbing all others. Other things are studied by other, distinct sciences. In analogy, besides the analogies of proportion, proportionality, and attribution, on which they agree, at least partly (although St. Thomas turned away from proportionality), St. Bonaventure relies heavily on the analogies of shadow, vestige and image, of which St. Thomas says nothing. For the Franciscan, exemplarism and illumination are central to theology. While the Dominican Doctor believes in these, they do not have for him the all-inclusive importance that Bonaventure gives them. These points suffice to establish a difference between their theologies in general and to prove the first part of the thesis.

### Conclusions of Part Two

The second part of the thesis is that the two great Doctors of the Church agree that Mary was Mother of God by her predestination and preparation, by her informed consent, essentially by her conceiving and bearing the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. With their overall agreement in doctrine goes a difference in tone. "The Dominican Doctor's Mariological teaching was far more austere than that of his ...opposite number in the Franciscan Order, St. Bonaventure."<sup>1111</sup> Their differences are secondary to their general agreement but still worthy of note.

Both teachers see Mariology as part of Christology and Christology as part of Soteriology.

<sup>1111</sup> Graef, *Mary*, I, 281.



On Mary's eternal predestination and on the impossibility of her meriting the Incarnation and the Divine Motherhood *de condigno*, the two Saints are in agreement. There is some disagreement about the kind of merit *de congruo* she had and about its priority in the Divine plan. The Angel of the Schools speaks only of congruous merit, with no further qualification. The Franciscan Master says the Blessed Virgin had a special kind of congruous merit, *de digno*. The Dominican said the Incarnation had to be decreed first and, after that, she could merit that it take place through her. Bonaventure may seem to say she merited, in some way, the Incarnation itself and not just that she be chosen for a role in it.

Both agree that Mary conceived Christ without the help of any man, by the productive or creative power of the Holy Spirit. They both say it was fitting, although they allege different reasons of fittingness. Each of them rejects, as titles for Christ, "Son of the Holy Spirit," and "Son of the Trinity," St. Thomas more firmly.

They seem to be completely at one in affirming Our Lady's virginity in giving birth and her perpetual virginity thereafter.

That Mary had a vow of virginity, they agree, and that it was appropriate. But they disagree as to the nature of the vow before marriage, absolute for St. Bonaventure, not absolute, maybe only a desire, for St. Thomas. Also they disagree on the nature of matrimonial consent in general. Mary's consent might have been affected by a previous vow. The Angelic Doctor says matrimonial consent always involves at least a conditional consent to conjugal relations. Bonaventure says only to the *right* to such relations. Our Lady, he says, gave St. Joseph this right, confident he would never use it and so, her matrimonial consent was absolute, with no such condition as Thomas held.

As to the Blessed Virgin's holiness, the Seraphic Doctor says, from her first sanctification, before birth, she had the ability to avoid all sin. After the Incarnation and a second sanctification, she had the inability to commit any sin. St. Thomas says only that she committed no sin, although he, too, says there were two sanctifications during her earthly life, one before birth, the other at the Annunciation, besides her final sanctification at her entrance into heaven. They agree the "tinder of concupiscence," the habitual inclination to sins of bodily desire, was rendered ineffective at her first sanctification and entirely removed at the Incarnation.

Both follow all the greatest theologians of antiquity and of their day in denying the Immaculate Conception. Their principal reason was that it seemed opposed to the universality of Christ's redemption. They did allow her the greatest and the earliest sanctification that seemed compatible with that.

As to Our Lady's consent, they agree on much. They disagree as to the merit of that consent, whether it was a special kind of congruous merit and



whether, in any sense, it merited the Incarnation itself, as discussed above. Also, St. Bonaventure attributes to Mary, at the time of the consent, a complete foreknowledge of the mysteries of the Redemption. St. Thomas says nothing of this.

On the conception and birth of the Divine Word, the Seraphic Doctor denies any "consumption of a human person." The Angelic allows it but only in an improper sense. No great difference.

About the union of the human nature to the Divine Person, Bonaventure emphasizes the generation and assumption of the human nature, thus agreeing more with the Thomas of the *Sentences* than of the *Summa*, where the Incarnation is treated as a union, not *in fieri*, but *in facto esse*.

How did Mary cooperate with the Holy Spirit in the Incarnation? The Common Doctor says, following Aristotle, that all mothers are completely passive. The Franciscan Master says mothers in general are somewhat active and the Blessed Virgin had the supernatural power to be even more so but was, in fact, wholly passive. This was because the formation of Christ's body had to be instantaneous and a creature must always act successively in time. Thus they agree on the fact, disagree on the reasons for the fact. Mary did cooperate in preparing the matter for Christ's conception but beyond that, she did nothing. Where there is no activity at all, there is no supernatural activity. Bonaventure holds Mary is more truly a mother to Christ than other mothers to their children. Thomas says only that she did for him what other mothers do.

The great Doctors both teach Mary is truly the Mother of God and has a real relation to her Son, although he has only a mental relation to her. Her maternity brought great grace to her and to all.

They both teach that Mary died and afterward was assumed bodily into heaven. They disagree on the nature of human mortality, St. Bonaventure holding that human nature is, of itself, neither mortal nor immortal and St. Thomas that, since it is composed of different elements, it is naturally mortal.

These two great Saints and theologians agree on all the main points about Our Lady's Divine Maternity, although they sometimes reach their conclusions by different theological routes and some secondary differences remain between them.

### Concluding Unscientific Postscript<sup>1112</sup>

Many ask, "Why are the Mariologies of Sts. Thomas and Bonaventure so similar when they are so different in their basic theologies." My response will be brief and unscientific because the answer lies in their predecessors and I do

<sup>1112</sup> With apologies to S. Kiergaard.



not want to analyze their relations with their forerunners. It took five hundred pages to compare Thomas and Bonaventure. Comparing them with Alexander of Hales, John of LaRochelle, St. Albert the Great and others would come to five times five hundred pages. Forgive my superficiality.

### *They Inherited Two Different Theologies*

Why do they have two dissimilar general theologies and, basically one and the same Mariology? Because they inherited two dissimilar general theologies and a Mariology basically one and the same. St. Bonaventure inherited an Neo-Platonist Augustinian theology from his Franciscan teachers, St. Thomas, an Aristotelian theology from his Dominican. All theology consists in the application of a philosophy (or crypto-philosophy) to the basic proclamation of the religion. Medieval theology does this more openly than later ones. Two different philosophical instruments produce two distinct theologies, the difference further aggravated by religious-order *esprit-de-corps*. St. Bonaventure had to adopt some Aristotelianism because of the statutes of the University of Paris. His reluctance and opposition to Aristotle contrast starkly with St. Thomas' wholehearted acceptance. These varying acceptances are discussed in Part One of this dissertation.

Does this explain the differences? The different philosophical theologies of their different, often contending religious orders? How much explanation is needed? How different were their theologies? The need for explanation might be moderated by saying their differences in general theology are not *infinitely* great. They are worthy of note because of the closeness of their backgrounds. And there are differences in their Mariologies which are not *infinitely* small, although they both follow the Mariology then current on the Continent of Europe. These admissions militate against the thesis, which is, "Big differences in overall theologies, no difference in Mariologies." I still believe that can reasonably be maintained and, after making and explaining the admissions, I shall defiantly re-affirm my thesis.

We must ask just how different the theologies are. This, by your leave, is a dissertation. It takes a very small topic and examines microscopic similarities and differences. A tabloid newspaper ignores small differences, reports only huge differences, and, of course, dramatizes them in such a way as to make them seem even more shocking. Tabloids provide needed entertainment to many: God prosper them. Dissertations, far less entertaining, have different goals and deal with tiny, boring differences.

At the beginning of Part One, before presenting differences between the Doctors, a section told of their similarities. These are important. Briefly to re-



call them; they were both Catholics of the Continent of Europe, immune from Mariological developments in the British Isles, both members of the recently founded mendicant orders, both studied and taught at the University of Paris, at exactly the same time. Repeating that they were Catholic theologians on a Catholic continent, let us remember they exercised their profession under the watchful eye of an energetic Mother Church, who publicly incinerated, not only theological writings but, not infrequently, "pour encourager les autres," the theologians themselves. This vigilant, efficient Magisterium was a strong motive toward uniformity. Any lust for originality, for dramatic differences between one's own theology and what was generally accepted, was wisely mortified. There were, of course, differences between theological schools. And religious orders defended what they called "our truth:" for instance, in our purview, Franciscan Neo-Platonist Augustinianism, Dominican Aristotelianism. Prudent individuals stayed well within the doctrine of their schools and orders. There were *no* awards for uniqueness. At least, not desirable ones. Medieval man was community-oriented. Against this background of strict uniformity, small differences stand out.

Today, professors publish or perish. They compete for students, readers, publishers. They *must* be different, nay astounding! What a rich variety this pressure produces! Hegelian "Modernists," more recent Existentialists, Linguistic-Analytic "God-is dead!" theologians, orthodox Marxist-Leninist (God save the mark!) Liberation theologians (still claiming to be "Catholic")! Against this luxuriant flowering, poor drab Aquinas and Bonaventure seem like two peas in a pod. Or at least like two sons of the same Mother. For they were!

Authors pointing out differences between St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure abound. (Cf. footnotes to *Part One*, above.) These did I carefully collect and – perhaps in tabloid fashion – dramatically heap up. Nor have I lied. Numerous authors did make these numerous assertions of difference. Apparently, they, too, thought in dissertation-fashion, not that of the tabloids. *Caveat lector!* Distinguish literary genres! Here, you shall find rather small differences.

As some are "more equal" than others, so some are more different. We are accustomed to Thomas-type theologians today. Bonaventure seems outlandish, "more different." I said in the body of this work that his union of theology with devout emotion is found among us in preachers and religious poets. We accept them easily. We expect theologians to be dry and scientific. And maybe that is right. But Thomas and Bonaventure are no more different than today's scientific theologian and his emotional homiletic colleague. Or even the same theologian, preaching emotionally at his Sunday help-out, then returning to the arid halls of academe.

Again, I say, "I did not lie!" There *are* differences between Thomas and Bonaventure. They are of interest to, and didactically asserted by, professional



theologians. But what would the *National Enquirer* or *The New York Daily News* say of them? "Tweedledum and Tweedledee! Two silly medieval logic-choppers solemnly squabbling about angels on a pin-point. Or comparable rot!"

### *They Inherited One Mariology*

These two basically similar theologians inherited one identical Mariology from outside themselves. They were not troubadours, improvising from a starting hint – "A certain divinity took human form in the womb of a maiden" – and told to make up their own songs about it. They were *given* the doctrine of Augustine, Damascene, Bernard, and Peter Lombard and told to incorporate it into a course of theology. And to do so under the irritable eye of Mother Church, equipped with sword and flame for the promotion of uniformity. Explosive originality would *not* have been a sign of intelligence. And here, there was no Augustinian Mariology, no Aristotelian Mariology (except, perhaps for the total passivity of all mothers) to inherit from one's confreres. They received *one* Mariology and, for the most part, stayed with it.

But whatever is received is received in the manner of the recipient. They received one Mariology in two different manners, one, affective, the other unemotional. Therefore there are differences in their doctrines on Mary, which differences I consider minor indeed, and these have already been mentioned. Some of the most important are as follows. St. Bonaventure said that, after the Annunciation, Mary *could* not sin and she knew all mysteries. St. Thomas said only that she *did* not sin and said nothing about knowledge of mysteries. Bonaventure said Mary made an absolute vow of virginity from the beginning and gave an absolute consent to her marriage. Thomas spoke of a mere intention at first, followed by a conditional vow and, finally, an absolute vow after marriage. Her consent to that marriage, he said, was somewhat conditional. Thomas, following Aristotle, said Mary had no active power to conceive Christ; Bonaventure, influenced by Galen, said she *had* such power, though she never used it. The Angelic Doctor said Mary did what other mothers do; the Seraphic said she was more a mother than others. For Bonaventure, Our Lady has a strong causal role in the distribution of grace. Thomas says nothing of her causality in this distribution, although contemporary Thomists credit her with a physical, instrumental, dispositive causality. Thomas permits the devout to believe in the bodily assumption to heaven of St. John or others. Bonaventure defends Mary's Assumption as a unique privilege, an unparalleled jewel in her crown. Do these seem major differences? Put them back into the context of their whole Mariologies. They are one per cent of the whole. Maybe two.

What is the reason for their minor Mariological differences? There may be specific reasons in individual cases. One important reason, outlined throughout



Part One, is that, while St. Bonaventure, following the Franciscan Augustinian tradition, held the purpose of theology was to excite devotion and encourage us to virtue, St. Thomas, with other Dominicans, accepted Aristotle's scientific detachment. While the former practiced theology as an affective science, the latter followed the norms of a demonstrative science. Besides these small differences in doctrinal propositions, there is a great difference in *tone*, as there is throughout their theologies, Bonaventure devout and emotional, Thomas, dry and abstract.

### *They Inherited a Meager Mariology*

The limited variation in their Mariologies seems to come from the limited Marian theology of Continental Europe in the century before. There was not a great wealth from which to choose. O'Connor speaks of the *crudeness* of its intellectual equipment and the *poverty* of its content.<sup>1113</sup> It had "no such thing as a treatise of Mariology.... Marian questions are raised only incidentally in Christology."<sup>1114</sup> He contrasts this with the vibrant state of Marian devotion. "This is after all one of the great Marian eras – the age of St. Bernard and of cathedrals dedicated to Notre Dame."<sup>1115</sup> Why was this lively activity not reflected in the scientific, academic literature?

O'Connor answers, "The reason, I believe, is that these Marian beliefs were not yet gripped firmly enough to be taught as doctrine or even discussed as questions. The literature which arose out of Christian piety and was addressed to it could express the intimations of this piety long before the cold reason of theologians was able to pin down the objective truths and incorporate them into an intellectual synthesis."<sup>1116</sup>

Hilda Graef calls this, as O'Connor tells us,<sup>1117</sup> "The golden age of Mariology."<sup>1118</sup> But most of the "gold" she shows us is in the literature of prayer and devotion: the "Salve Regina," the "Alma Redemptoris Mater," the popularization of the "Hail Mary," rhythmic Marian greeting hymns, Marian litanies, greeting psalters, primitive origins of the rosary, Marian homilies, versified novels detailing her physical beauty, and many "Laments of Mary." Daring to differ with

<sup>1113</sup> E. O'Connor, "The Origin of Scholastic Mariology," *De cultu mariano saeculis XII-XV*, vol. IV., *De cultu mariano apud scriptores ecclesiasticos saec. XII-XIII*, *Acta congressus Mariologici-Mariani internationalis Romae anno 1975 celebrati* (Rome: Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis, 1980), p. 25.

<sup>1114</sup> O'Connor, p. 2.

<sup>1115</sup> O'Connor, p. 25.

<sup>1116</sup> O'Connor, p. 25.

<sup>1117</sup> O'Connor, p. 25.

<sup>1118</sup> Graef, *Mary*, I, p. 210.

this distinguished scholar, Graef, (relying on the arguments of O'Connor), we might re-title this century before our two Doctors, "The golden age of Marian devotion," and, perhaps, "The cold gray dawn of Marian theology."

At this same time, great work was being done in monasteries.<sup>1119</sup> But this was a different world from that of the universities. Communication was slow and there were some feelings of antagonism. John of Salisbury spoke of university people as "Cornificians."

Sts. Thomas and Bonaventure were affected by this poverty of the Mariology in the *university*. They seem to have been greatly influenced by these immediate predecessors. They show it in their academic restraint. Their scholastic works say Mary was sanctified for her bearing the Savior (short of an Immaculate Conception), she bore him, and she mediated grace to us, precisely by this birth. For more, we must look to their sermons. The two friars reflect the age in which they lived. This seems to explain the similarity of their Mariologies, in spite of the difference of their whole theologies.

Fr. T. Heath says of St. Thomas' attitude toward the Immaculate Conception, "Although his head was going in one direction, his heart seems definitely to be headed in another." This could be truly said of *all* of his Mariology, and that of St. Bonaventure, and that of the whole century before them.

I repeat the opening of this "Postscript." Should I re-word my beginning thesis and final conclusions? I might, more cautiously say, "Thomas and Bonaventure, on the whole similar, had certain differences, emphasized by scholars. These differences are greatly reduced, almost disappearing, in their Mariologies." I do not believe it is necessary to be so cautious. We are talking about two thirteenth-century Catholic theologians of the Continent of Europe, who studied and taught at the same university at the same time. That is what logicians call "the universe of discourse." It is not necessary to say Bonaventure and Thomas disagree with the *National Enquirer* or Jehovah's Witnesses' *Watchtower*, or *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk*. It is not necessary to deny or exclude statements that would have to be mentioned and excluded in those contexts. In my little medieval "universe of discourse," their theological differences are quite noteworthy, their Mariological similarities stand in contrast to those differences. I would like to let my thesis stand, and now, re-state it as my conclusion.

<sup>1119</sup> T. Koehler, speaking at my defense of this thesis, July 21 (Feast of St. Lawrence of Brindisi), 2000.



*Conclusions of the Dissertation*

St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure have very different theologies in general.

Their teachings on Mary, the Mother of God are very similar, having some significant but secondary differences.

There is something missing in all creatures...

Those that are carnal  
are in want of pureness.

This we know.

But those that are pure  
are in want of being carnal.

But in her nothing is lacking...

Because being carnal, she is pure.

But being pure, she is also carnal.

And it is for this she is not only a unique woman  
among all women.

She is a unique creature among all creatures.

She comes literally first after God.

After the Creator.

She is next.<sup>1120</sup>

<sup>1120</sup> Péguy, *The porch of the mystery of the second virtue*, in *Oeuvres Poétiques Complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975) 57ff.